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PS2

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO THE LAUNCH GAMES, DVDS AND EVERYTHING PLAYSTATION 2

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MEET NINTENDO'S NEW SYSTEM: GAMECUBE PG. 30

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PlayStation

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You can always tell who's been playing Kessen.

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EDITORIAL

By Joe Funk • joe_funk@ziffdavis.com

The Best of Times...

We're breaking fresh coverage on no less than four new consoles (PS2, Gamecube, Game Boy Advance and Xbox) this month. And while we've always considered it a pleasure and privilege to cover this most fascinating of industries, we can say that the next year will surely be the best of times for gamers everywhere.

Of course, PS2 hogs most of the limelight this month as Sony puts the finishing touches on what will undoubtedly be the biggest one-day product launch in entertainment history. We give you the obligatory nuts and bolts info on the most powerful home gaming console ever produced, but then we also take a fresh angle by dreaming up the perfect PS2 launch party—think of this PS2 Xanadu as a hermetically sealed biosphere designed exclusively for you, your friends and your brand-new PS2. We were so intent on finding the perfect spot that Crispin even broke out his old red, white and blue Olympic team Speedo from yesteryear to inspect good spots. Sony appears poised for world—or at least living room—domination, and SCEA COO Kaz Hirai told us he has some lofty goals for PS2: "The truth is the biggest competition is not necessarily traditional competitors like Nintendo, Sega and Microsoft, but rather...seeing a movie or going out to play pool...any type of entertainment really, is our competition."

Nintendo made double-barreled news of its own in late August at the Spaceworld Expo in Tokyo by finally unveiling Gamecube (still sounds weird to me) and Game Boy Advance.

The simultaneous announcements are not a coincidence as Nintendo clearly plans to expand and explore the immense possibilities of linking stand-alone handheld and console systems together. Already, Mario Inc. is puffing out its chest. "Developers and the market have pretty much dismissed Sega. We certainly can't ignore Sony, but Gamecube will perform very well against PlayStation 2," George Harrison, Nintendo of America's vice president of marketing, confidently told Forbes.com. "Microsoft has the novelty factor and plenty of money, but no existing customers."

Microsoft, meanwhile, widened their growing block of supporters by announcing several more third-party developers who'll be hopping on the Xbox bulldozer. Apparently they're close to unveiling the hardware. Xbox CXO Robbie Bach confirmed at the Ziff Davis Electronic Gaming Summit that the chip set and gamepad design are finished. Microsoft VP Ed Fries heightened curiosity and fueled speculation that Xbox might be a bit larger than its competitors and look more like a home theater amplifier by cryptically telling the *SF Chronicle*, "We're finishing the space between the fins..." whatever that means.

On top of all this, we have pantloads of new previews and reviews for all of the current consoles. With all this good stuff, it's probably best now that I shut up and get out of your way...

Joe Funk

> **"Sony appears poised for world—or at least living room—domination."**

Contributing Writers

Michael Price

Our very own violence connoisseur, Mike is an expert in more kinds of kung fu than we can pronounce. When he's not teaching martial arts or starring in Mexican chop-socky specials, he's bulking up to become a real-life WWF wrestler.

Marc Saltzman

The author of this month's how-to feature is a freelance journalist for *Playboy, USA Today, Yahoo! Internet Life* and more than 40 other mags. Marc is also the editor of *Game Design: Secret of the Sages*, in which he interviews hundreds of game designers.

Peter M. Bracke

We wanted to include a DVD primer in our PS2 feature, so we turned to a true digital-flick expert to write the thing. Peter is the editor in chief of DVDFile.com (www.dvdfile.com), your ultimate source for DVD movie and hardware news and reviews.

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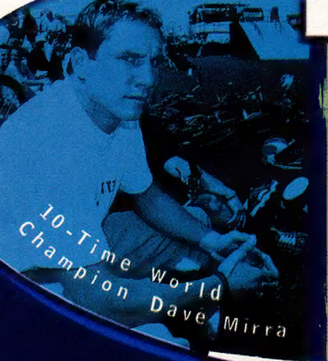
10-Time World Champion Dave Mirra

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Dave Mirra, Ryan Nyquist, Leigh Ramsdell, Mike Laird, Troy McMurray, Kenan Harkin, Joey Garcia, Shaun Butler, Chad Kagy and Tim Mirra.

Killer soundtrack: Sublime, Cypress Hill, Rancid, Social Distortion, Deftones, Pennywise, Drop Kick Murphys, 59 Times the Pain and Swingin' Utters.

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PlayStation

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB Mild Language

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Miracle Boy and Nyquist

slim jim

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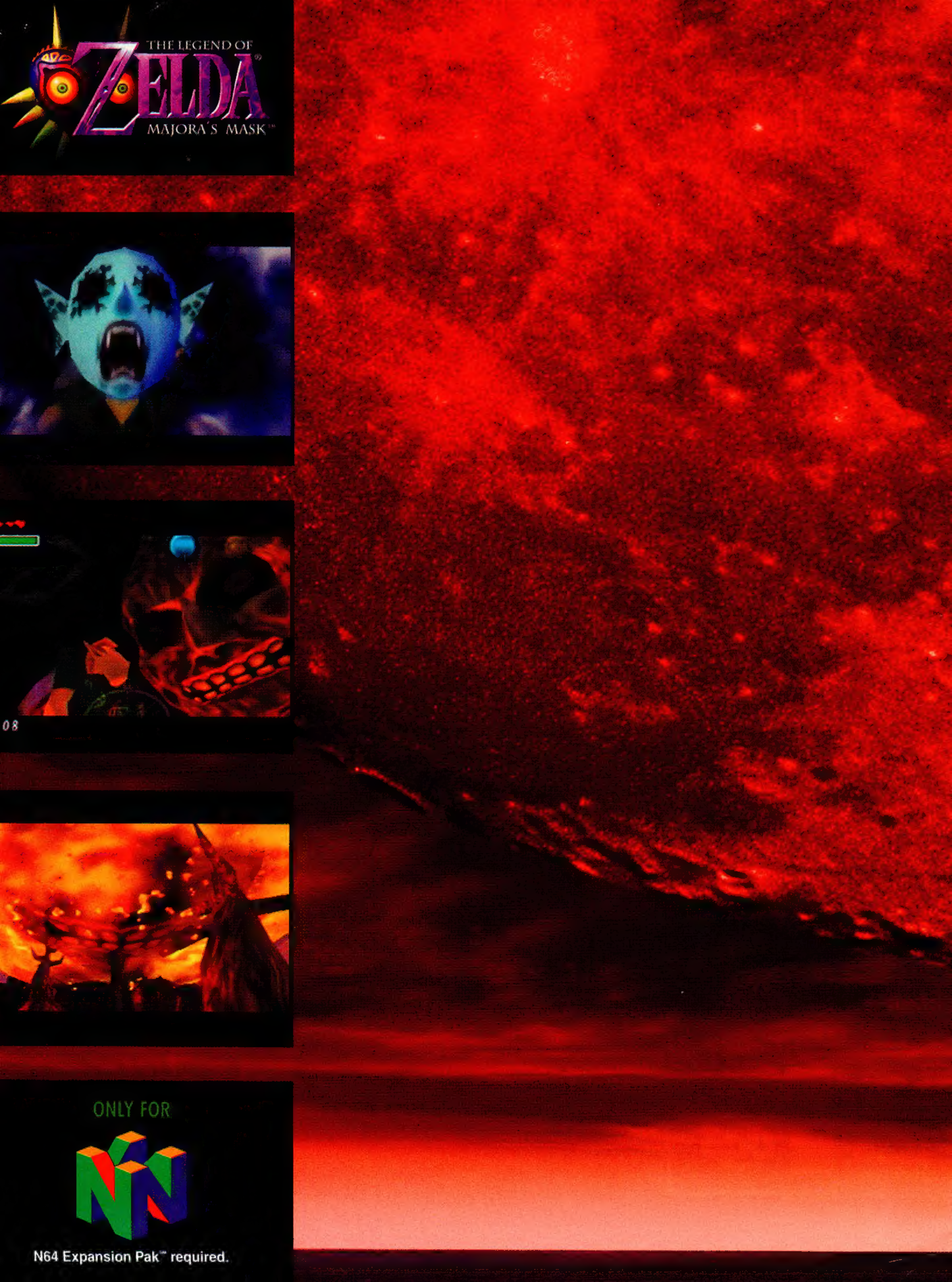
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EA SPORTS
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NFL
2001
TITANS
27

Actual game screen.

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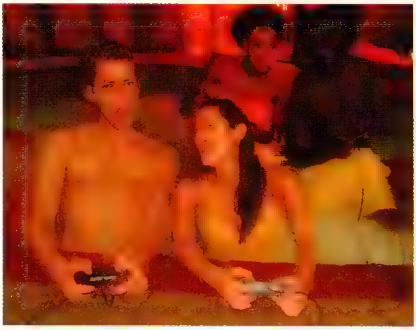
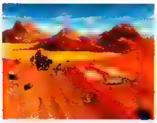


The Ultimate PlayStation 2 Launch Party We leave no stone unturned in our quest to help you throw the biggest launch celebration since NASA shot that monkey into space. Inside, you'll find in-depth guides to the launch games, DVDs, audio gear and more. The festivities begin on **page 176**



Star Wars: Episode I: Battle for Naboo Ep. 2 talk may be flaring up, but Lucas isn't done milking Ep. 1 yet. **pg 104**

Illustrations by Chris Martin

How to Get a Job in the Games Biz Writer Marc Saltzman talked to the hottest developers in the industry and asked the big question: How do we get a job? **pg 222**

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A new Wave Race? A new Metroid? And even a new Zelda? Find out about all the goodies headed your way through Nintendo's shiny, new Gamecube and Game Boy Advance.

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Is it a space-age box or perhaps an '80s alarm clock? Find out what we think of Nintendo's bizarre-looking Gamecube.

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Mat "Condor" Hoffman – BMX vert innovator, Bicycle Stunt Series creator, bike manufacturer extraordinaire – has skills to loan. Ride like Mat and BMX's top pros as they [illegible]tic vert ramps, street courses, dirt tracks and the infamous Hoffman [illegible] Park. [illegible] gap with Escamilla. Flip with Nastazio. X-up everything with "Butcher" Kowalski. And do what no other rider can: launch 27 feet with the Condor himself. There's also a Real-Time Course Editor to create dream terrain. And a career mode that challenges you to go big and move up the ranks. Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX – ride like the world's best, without having to shop for black market internal organs.

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- Letters/letter art from prisoners: 9
- Letters about Monster Parties: 5
- # of letters we're sorry we couldn't respond to: 873
- # of letters we're sorry we could respond to: 3
- Avg. # of daily e-mails: 150

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Thank You Sir, May We Have Another

I am a retired USAF officer who happens to like to play video games for a diversion. Needless to say, I am older than anyone on your staff—including yourself. I subscribe to five game magazines. Know why? **I want to know what to buy.** Too many magazines lose sight of that **prime objective** in their zeal to provide "interest" items. They fail as a magazine.

> "Endless stupid frigging pictures of the staff picking their noses or goosing each other. Who gives a s#!%? Cut it."

What is desirable:

1. Complete and detailed data about new and upcoming games. What—when—how much—quality—etc.
2. Good pictures for graphic quality assessment. Also profile of new upcoming games. Twice a year would also be dandy.
3. Detailed info on upcoming new systems.
4. Detailed **comparison** data on additional electronics that can be used with a system. What the hell is "S" video anyway? Where can you get one? How many kinds are there? How much? etc. What about sound systems? Amplifiers? How do you tie it all together? Give us some info., i.e., do a spread comparison on all hand controllers. Videos. Sound systems, etc. Compile and publish a listing of stores and dealers where one can purchase games and supplies.
5. Better organization: *EGM*'s Game Directory Aug. 2000 p. 14. Nice. Informative. Reader friendly! Should be on PAGE ONE however. Also same issue p. 60 Coming Soon section—nice. Organized. Should be on PAGE TWO however. Why in the hell should your readers have to search for the info they seek?? Organize! Recall why people read a game magazine!

Undesirable mindless filler:

1. Wasted space on stories about game designers. Who gives a shit? Do you want to know all about the man who designed the automatic transmission in your car? Or the garbage grinder in the sink? Who gives a shit? It's space wasted that could have been used to better inform readers about new games and equipment. Cut it.
2. Crap like "Girls of Summer" in a competitor's July issue. This is incredibly silly, childish and a waste of space. It deviates from the prime objective of a game magazine: info needed to buy games! Cut it.
3. Rock music? Who gives a shit? Cut it.
4. Artwork by staff and readers. Who cares? Cut it.
5. Letters from readers, etc. Who reads this shit? Cut it.
6. Questions and Answers, etc. See above. Cut it.
7. Editor's response, etc. See above. Highly unlikely to be cut. Too bad.
8. Endless stupid frigging pictures of the staff picking their noses or goosing each other. Who gives a shit? Cut it.
9. Endless pictures and wordplay concerning E3 2000...E7 20001, etc. Who gives a shit? Cut it.
10. Bizarre colored type, i.e., blue type on a red background. Some people (partly color blind) can't see this and other combinations very well. Consider your reader!

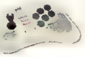
Gentlemen—I need intelligent insight concerning games I may wish to purchase!

Sincerely,
B.J. Hill

Thanks for the impassioned "critique," B.J. We are all now "standing tall before the man." Seriously, you make some good points, and you made most of us almost wet our little civilian shorts with laughter. We have sent your requests up the chain of command, and are waiting for our CO to give the order to proceed.

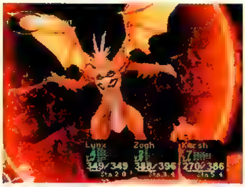
Congratulations. You win an InterAct controller. You will be receiving a Barracuda (PS), an Alloy Arcade Stick (DC) or a SharkPad Pro 64² (N64).

See page ??? for official rules.



Reader Angered Over Good Screenshot

I can't believe you guys! With your words you say that Chrono Cross is an incredible game with an excellent story. That part I don't deny. But with your screenshot you blew the best part of the story: the part where a switch takes place by showing that you play Lynx and Zoah and Karsh, all enemies, later in the game. I won't reveal more because I could easily be called a hypocrite by revealing the story, but you f-ers at *EGM* who are reading this know what I mean. I just played that part in the game and I pretty much could tell what would happen because of your damn picture. You should at least apologize to all of us who were screwed by your mistake and please pay more f-ing attention to your work! Holy S%!&!!!



In case you missed it, here's the screenshot that made Nathan curse.

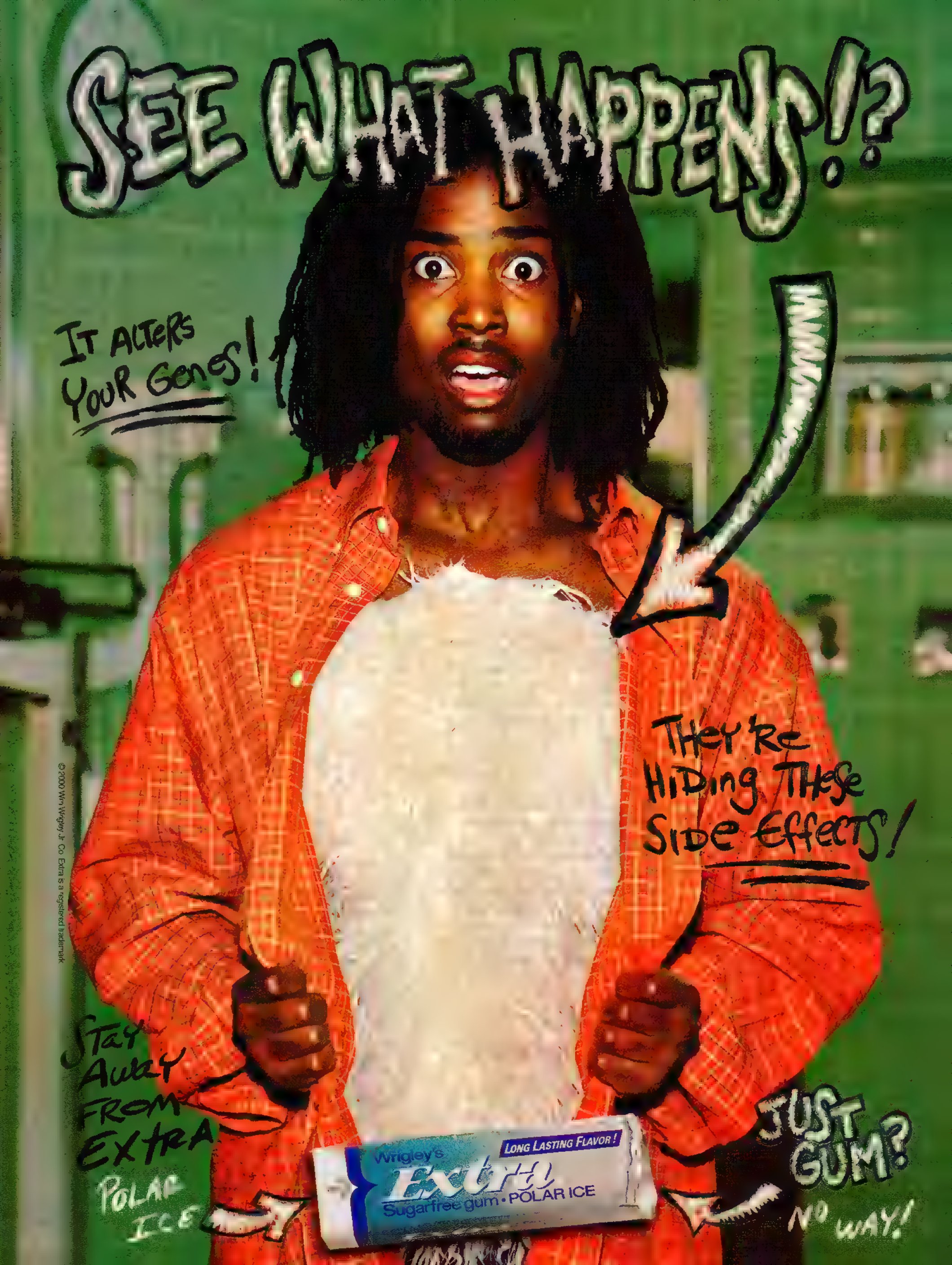
Nathan Spangler
ghettogimp@hotmail.com

We always take the best pics possible, and if they happen to show a key part of the game, then so be it. This merely proves our dedication to our craft, and that we make our decisions on a game after an exhaustive amount of playing time.

DC Owner Wants "Mod Life"

I own Half-Life for the PC and I download a lot of the mods (modifications) for the game. I'm looking forward to buying it for the

cont. on pg. 20


SEE WHAT HAPPENS!?
IT ALTERS YOUR GENES!
THEY'RE HIDING THESE SIDE EFFECTS!
STAY AWAY FROM EXTRA
POLAR ICE
Wrigley's
LONG LASTING FLAVOR!
Extra
Sugarfree gum • POLAR ICE
JUST GUM?
NO WAY!

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EGM@ziffdavis.com

Send us your thoughts, your wishes, your innermost weirdness...or your pictures, crazy screenshots or photos of bizarre game-related moments.

cont. from pg. 18

Dreamcast. I was wondering if there was any way I would be able to get and play mods for the Dreamcast?

"angrymac10"
Mark Howland
wyrms@bellatlantic.net

Definitely not with the first version of Half-Life (which won't even include Internet play), but who knows what the future may hold? Once the Dreamcast and other consoles get mass storage devices (zip drives, hard drives, etc.), we could see a community develop of people creating their own levels, characters and other mods for games and circulating them over the Net, just like the one currently thriving around PC games. You can already make your own levels in some games (like Tenchu 2), then Dexdrive them onto the Net to trade with other gamers; it's up to developers and the hardware companies whether or not this trend continues or declines.

Emasculation, Machine Guns and Pokémon

This is an open-ended letter to those who hate Pokémon.

I am a brave man, I am also a big man. I am proud to say I have caught about 110 Pokémon and will have the rest caught before October. I am 18 years old and engaged. I also study weapons in general with a particular fascination with machine guns. While not that many, but more than most, I have fired over a dozen machine guns, including two versions of everybody's favorite the MP5. I also work on my car because it's cheaper and any real man can do it (not to say that women can't, I don't wanna open that can of worms).

The point of all this is such: Pokémon fans aren't just little kids. Your boss might be one, your teacher might be one, and if you are one, stand proud and shout it from the rooftop.

Pokémon is not just a simple game. It is an RPG in the truest sense of the word. It is entertaining on many levels, even the simplest of minds can learn it, and most importantly it is fun.

Of those who hate Pokémon how many bred and bred 'til you got the Golden Chocobo in FFVII?

I thought so...

A wise man once said, "Only a fool hates that which he knows nothing about."

Before you go on your next anti-Pikachu rant sit down and play the game—the original Red, Blue or Yellow for 20 minutes. Perhaps it seems childish, but one of the best games I have ever played, I almost passed over. I'm glad I didn't make that mistake.

If you are so afraid of a little cartoon rat, then maybe you should be emasculated...that is all...

Jimmy the Viper
(Jim Reed)

"Those who hate Pokémon, how many bred and bred 'til you got the Golden Chocobo in FFVII? I thought so...a wise man once said, 'Only a fool hates that which he knows nothing about.'"

We are proud to announce the addition of a new special section, "Ask Jimmy the Viper," we're not sure what will be in this section, but Mr. Viper assured us it would be "Real good, such as it is, you pencil-neck freaks." So, with this ringing endorsement of our staff, coupled with his knowledge/love of machine guns, the column seemed like a "good fit."

PlayStation 2: Wrath of Rakan

I've been a fan for five years all the way from Saudi Arabia!

Where I live the PS2 is already out since May 2000 and I own a Nintendo 64. I was

SHORTS

The very bottom of the EGM letters barrel.

What's new pussycat? Whoa-ooh-whoa-ooh-whoa-ooh. What's new pussycat? Whoa-ooh-whoa-ooh-whoa-whoa whoa. Tyra Banks is hot. Whoa-ooh-whoa-ooh-whoa, oh whoa.

iguanaman323@hotmail.com

Fascinating, 'iguanaman', simply fascinating.

Waka-waka doo-doo-doo!

jfadc@yahoo.com

Ah, even more witty prose.

Question of the Moment

What PS2 launch title are you going to buy first?

None. I was gonna buy a PS2 but now that I've seen pictures of Metroid and Zelda on Starcube (Dolphin), I say screw Sony.

Citano09@aol.com

PS2? No thanks. I think I will grab Majora's Mask instead.

Big813@aol.com

What? PS2? F*** PlayStation 2, it's time to get with the Gamecube.

KroSsOVeR@aol.com

The game I am craving for is...THE BOUNCER!!! It has a *Matrix*-like feel, really great graphics and martial-arts action.

webe@inu.net

The Working Designs launch games: Gun Griffon Blaze and Silpheed: The Lost Planet. Mmmm...Game Arts, Treasure...(he drools).

name withheld

Definitely Smuggler's Run which I already have paid off—woo hoo!!

Crash416@snip.net

Not a one. I'll just sit there and marvel at my $300 DVD player that has the ability to play games (read: all the games look s#!%%y, IMO).

bigglesworth3626@yahoo.com

TIMESPLITTERS!! TIMESPLITTERS!! and maybe TIMESPLITTERS!!

pstaiano@yahoo.com

Personally...I'm gonna do what I did with the original and wait about two years to get a PS2. By then Armored Core and GT2000 will have received Greatest Hits treatment and Metal Gear Sons of Liberty will be in stores. Snooch-to-the-nooch.

GregoryJRansom@email.msn.com

The first game I am going to pick up is Ridge Racer V. Why you ask? So I can unlock Pac-Man and race with him!!!

mr_5five5@hotmail.com

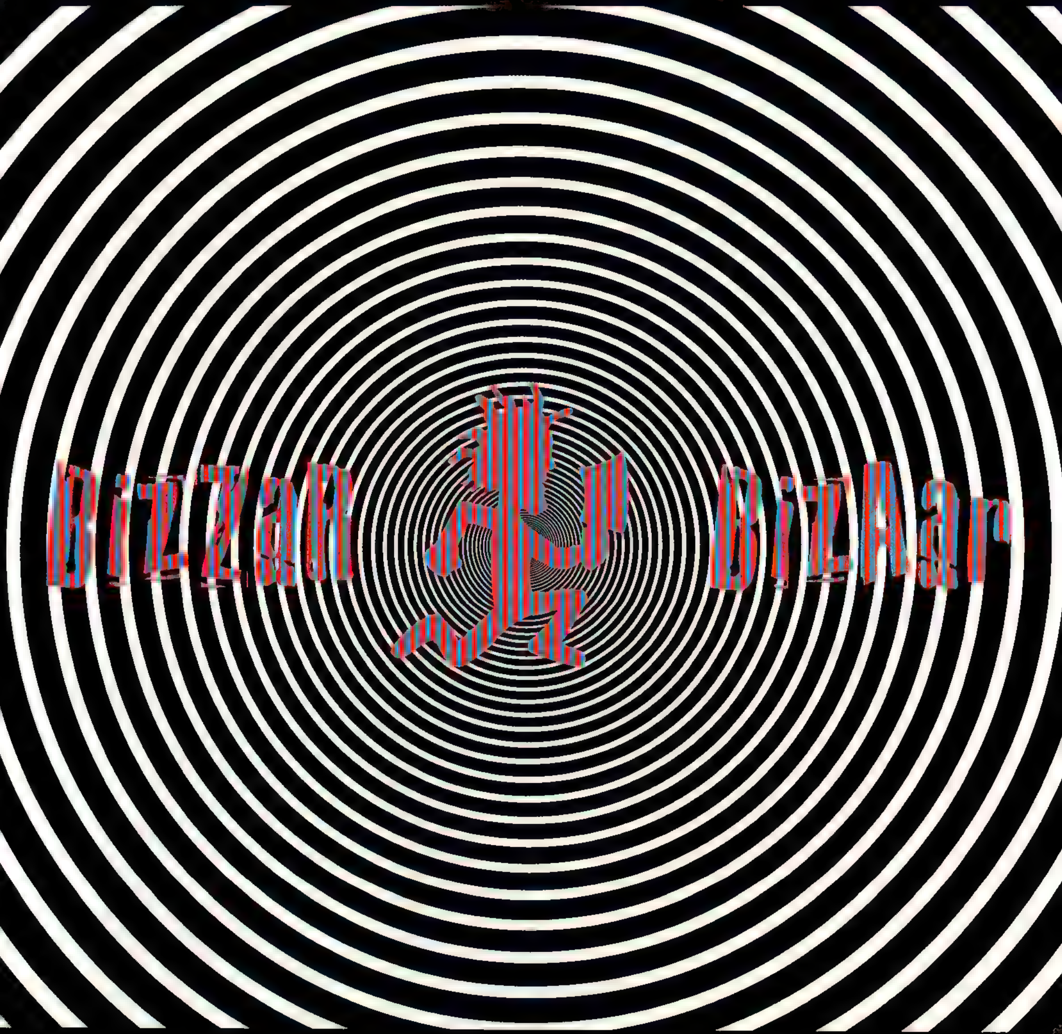
Next Month's Question of the Moment:

What do you think of the Nintendo GameCube?

Send your short but sweet responses to: EGM@ziffdavis.com with the subject heading:

N-Cube

INSANE CLOWN POSSE



BizzaR **BizAAr**

2 New CD's In Stores Halloween 2000

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Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338
e-mail: EGM@ziffdavis.com

Please note: We reserve the right to edit any correspondence for space purposes. If you don't want your name, city/state or e-mail address printed, tell us so (but please include your phone number and mailing address for Letter of the Month consideration).

cont. from pg. 20

going to buy a PS2 but I remembered what you said, "If we told you to buy a thousand fireflies would you buy them?" So I decided to wait for the Dolphin. Anyway, my point is that gaming isn't what it used to be. Now the consumer has to make a lot of choices, and there's a lot of crap games out there.

I am thinking there's going to be a lot of them on the X-Box. I am not saying that's bad or anything, because competition is good; it gives the consumer better options at lower costs and stuff like that.

But are we happier now? I know that some of us are and some of us aren't. And ONE MORE THING: PLEASE STOP PRAISING EVERY SYSTEM that COMES ALONG like when Sega came: "OHH SEGA RULES" and when you talk about PS2: "OHH PS2 IS THE BOMB." So as a favor, could you stop doing that please?

Rakan Aksoy
rakthevirus@hotmail.com

What do you want from us, firefly lover?

Father-Son Alien Hit Squad

Hi—I'm 34 and have a 6-year-old son. I've always loved video games and still have my first Atari 2600. My son and I now have a PlayStation along with a NES, Sega, TG16 (for Galaga 98) and several games for each. We really enjoyed playing the new Space Invaders game—it's kinda neat because two players are playing at the same time in "cooperative" or team mode. What I'm trying to find out is if there is a list somewhere of PlayStation games that includes a two-player cooperative mode? I'd like to find more games like this (I prefer the simple shoot-'em-ups and platform games like Crash, Space Invaders, Hercules, Sonic (for Sega), etc. They are the easiest for very young children to play, plus I'm kinda old-school (my all-time favorite game is Galaga).

Mike Cousins MJ SEPCO
mc979377@msxspec.shell.com

"My point is that gaming isn't what it used to be. Now the consumer has to make a lot of choices, and there's a lot of crap games out there."

We love co-op games too, and while we can't give you a comprehensive list, here's a few of our favorites we're sure will fit your old-school sensibilities: Devil Dice, G. Darius, Pong and the piece de resistance: Midway's Arcade Party Pak—which includes Rampage, Toobin', Super Sprint and Smash TV.

Monster Parties: Out Of Control?

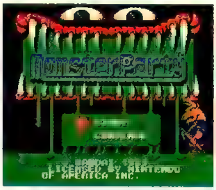
By any chance, is Crispin's Monster Parties a sequel, or related in any way, to the Monster Party 8-Bit title?

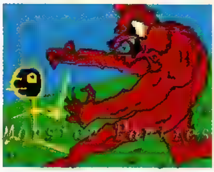
Szotial@aol.com

The game "Monster Parties" you created with the help of RPG Maker is a ripoff of a classic NES game by the name of Monster Party. That game was so cool that occasionally I still play it. I don't know if you've ever heard of it, but you should know that you are blatantly ripping off another game's name.

Finalgglenn@aol.com

Due to pending litigation and on the advice of his lawyers, Crispin has declined to comment. We did, however, obtain a copy of his court deposition: "I don't know nothin' about that NES Monster Party crap. I don't know a thing about its hero, Mark, or how he befriends a monster named Bert to rid the land of some of the lamest monsters I've ever seen—er, I mean never seen, because I don't know nothin'."





The original NES Monster Party (top,© 1989 Bandai) and Crispin Boyer's PS Monster Parties (© 2000 Blandai)

LETTER ART

WINNER

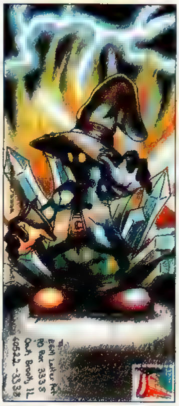
Jesus Diaz
Mt. Olive, NC

Congratulations! Your prize is on the way—an ASCII Specialized Control Pad for the PlayStation. It features rapid-fire controls for all buttons and solw motion for those intense moments.

The ASCII Control Pad

Put your creative skills to the test by decking out a #10 envelope (the long business type) with your own unique touch. Send your letter art to:

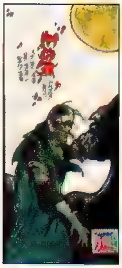
EGM Letter Art
PO Box 3338
Oak Brook, IL
60522-3338



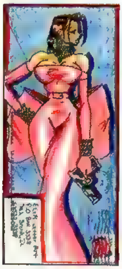
(All entries become the property of Ziff Davis Media Inc. and will not be returned!)

Close, but no controller

Bad luck to these guys... better luck next time. Feel free to e-mail us artwork as well. More of our messages are e-mails these days-so don't miss out!



Christian Dahl
Rancho Santa Margarita, CA



Marcus Dillard
Hollywood, FL

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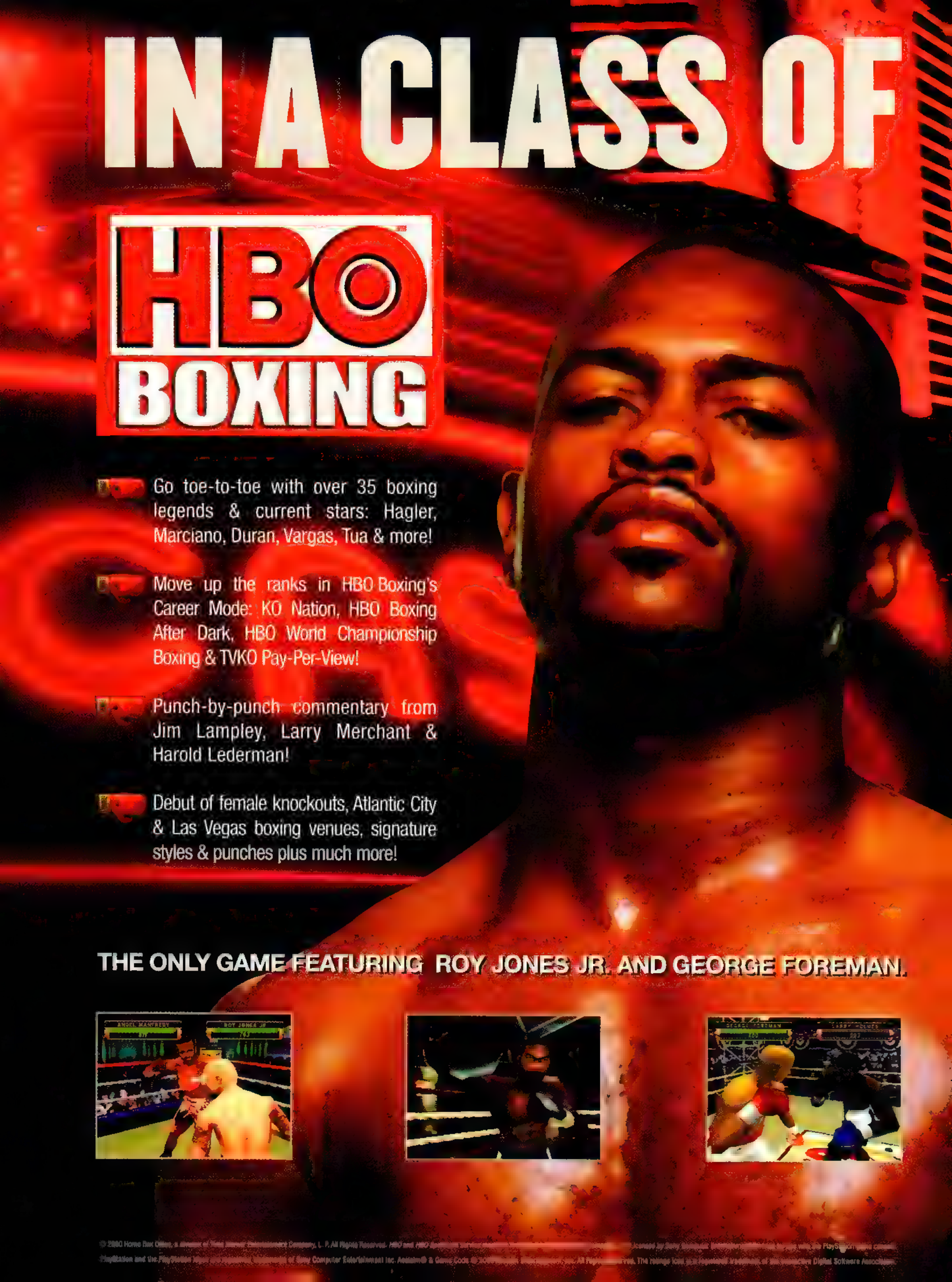
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ANGEL MANFREDY
ROY JONES JR
GEORGE FOREMAN
LARRY HOLMES

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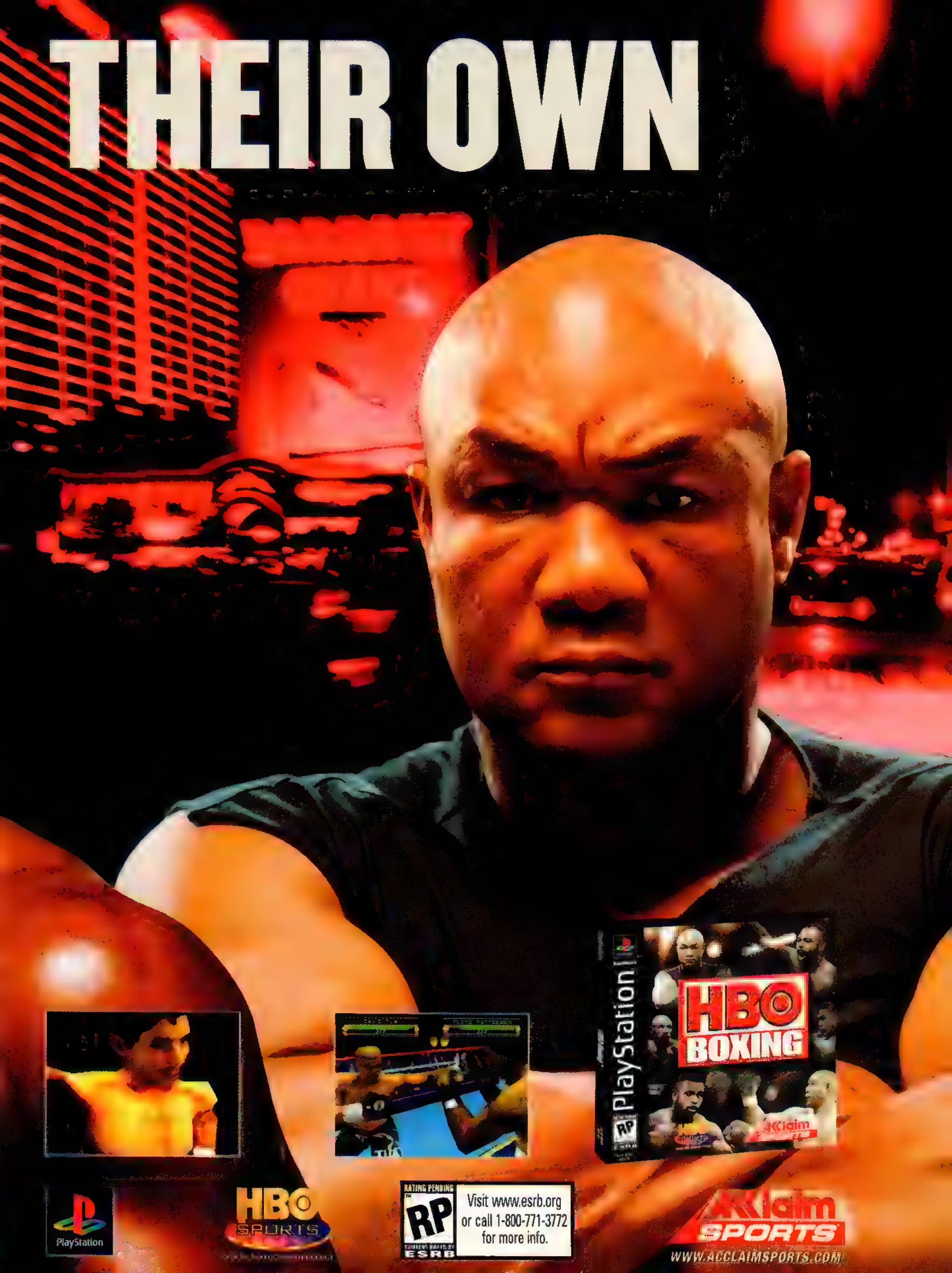
THEIR OWN
PlayStation
HBO BOXING
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PlayStation 2

"It's historic, a mass-market appliance

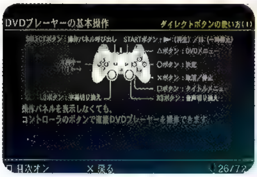
PS2:

SO WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU TURN ON THE PS2?

Well, first, of course, you have the nifty new start-up sequence (far right), and if you have a PS1, PS2, or DVD disc in the system it will automatically load. But if there's nothing in the system, or the drive tray is open, you go to the new system menu where you have three choices: Browser, System Configuration, and Version.

THE BROWSER

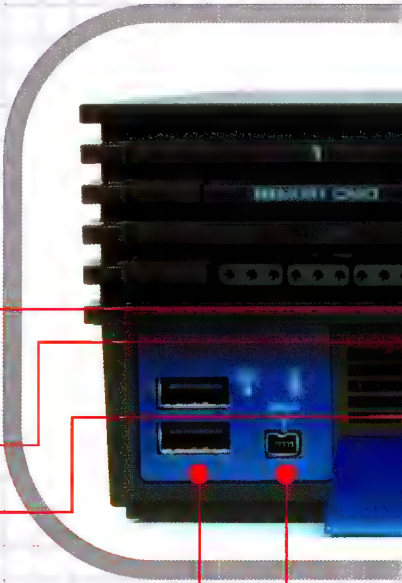
No, not Netscape—this isn't that type of Browser. This is where you mess with everything hooked up to your PS2: Any memory cards, PocketStations, DVD video discs, audio CDs, PS1 or PS2 games in the system will appear here as little icons. If you select a memory card, you will go to the memory card management screen: Select any software and it will load. Presumably other peripherals, such as hard drives, modems, and other extras will also be accessed through here in the future.



操作パネルを表示しなくても、
コントローラのボタンで直接DVDプレーヤーを操作できます。

UTILITY DISK

The only CD that comes packed in with the PlayStation2 isn't a bunch of game demos (as was previously promised), but more or less an electric version of the instruction manual. It walks you through the use of various parts of the hardware, and also includes a short sample of DVD video and the PS2's DVD player driver so you can reinstall it to your memory card if you need to.



The controller ports and memory card slots, all the same size and shape as on the original PlayStation. Only two sets? Yup. Sony says they didn't include more controller ports in order to keep costs low.

The good ol' PlayStation logo, which you can rotate easily to suit a vertical or horizontal configuration.

The light in the Reset button glows red when the system is idle, and green when it is active. The eject button has a blue light that flashes when the drive is opening or closing.

You might recognize these little buggers called USB ports—they come standard on modern PCs. All kinds of peripherals—mice, keyboards, scanners, printers, cameras, hard drives—can plug in here, quick and easy.

The IEEE 1394
interface port
PS2 an incred

that fundamentally changes society in

THE SY

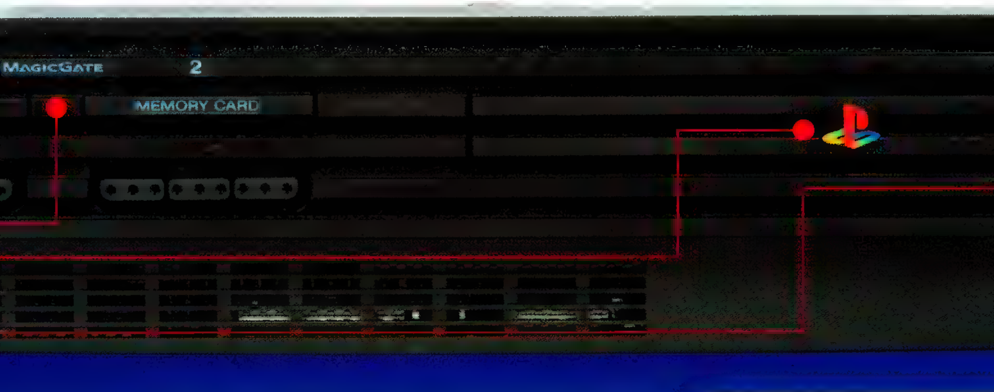
SYSTEM CONFIGURATION

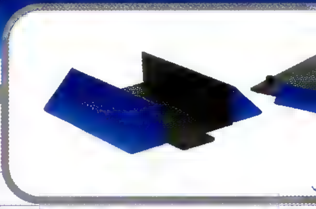
Here's where you can customize your system's settings: change the language for the menus to Japanese or English, the time and date (yes, the PS2 has an internal clock), turn the digital audio out on or off, set the component video out to RGB or Y Cb/Pb Cr/Pr, and finally adjust the screen ratio to full screen or the letterboxed 4:3 or 16:9 ratios.

VERSION

These are the programs that run various functions inside your PS2, and will surely be upgradeable in the future. The list on the system as it stands now is browser, CD player, PlayStation driver and DVD driver, all of which are version 1.00 (not surprising since this is from one of the first PS2s off the production line!). You can't really do much here yet, except for one very important, very cool setting under the PlayStation driver, where you can adjust the PS2 to play your PS1 games with faster loading and smoother textures.

[PS2 SHOWN ACTUAL SIZE]





port, also known by the much more friendly name "Firewire." This same digital can be found on camcorders, cameras and iMac computers, and will give the ibly fast connection to those kinds of peripherals in the future.

the same way the printing press did."

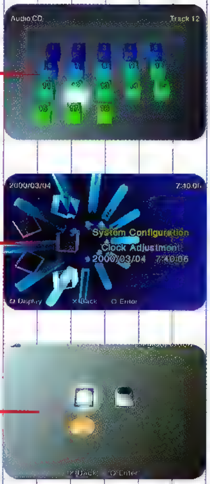
Trip Hawkins, CEO of 3DO, on the PS2 to Newsweek

STEM

PlayStation.2

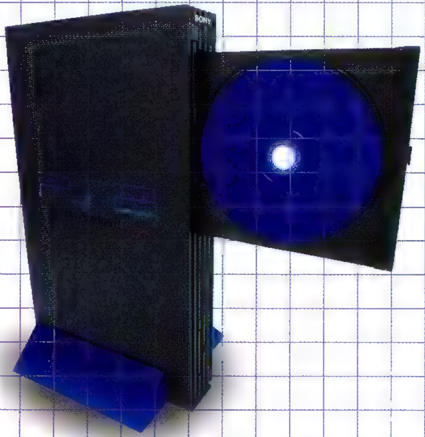
BOOTY CALL

On bootup, four colored lights (purple, red, blue, and green) swirl around a dark blue mist, with any number of transparent cubes scattered about—the number of cubes seems to increase the more you play your PS2. After a couple of seconds and a loud tone, the "camera" zooms into the mist, and your disc loads. Huzzah!



Here we have a pic of the PS2's CD player interface (top)—unfortunately even more boring than the PS1's. Next is a shot of a system settings screen (middle), which keeps up the "clear crystal and swirling lights" motif of all the system menus. And finally we see what the browser looks like (bottom), with a memory card, PocketStation and DVD in the PS2, all represented by icons.

Two different stands went on sale along with the PS2 in Japan, a horizontal and a vertical stand. The horizontal stand (about $9) lays under the PS2 and really doesn't do much except look nice, while the vertical stand (about $14) stabilizes the PS2 so it can stand on one end and save space.



THE DVD MOVIES

Unlike the Japanese PlayStation2, which requires a memory card file to play DVD movies, the U.S. version allows you to watch your favorite flicks right out of the box. If you've yet to watch a movie on DVD, you'll immediately see the giant increase in visual quality that it offers. And don't forget all those nifty extras such as trailers, behind the scenes footage and director's commentary, that can be found on many DVD releases.

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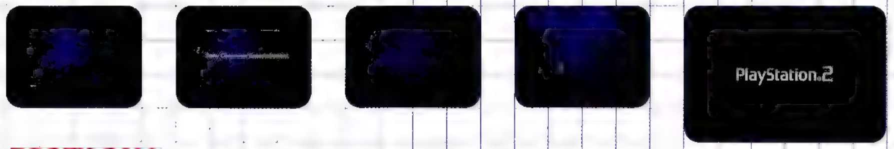

BOOTY CALL

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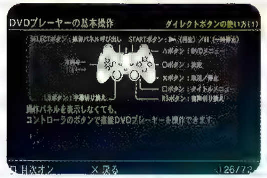

DVDプレーヤーの基本操作

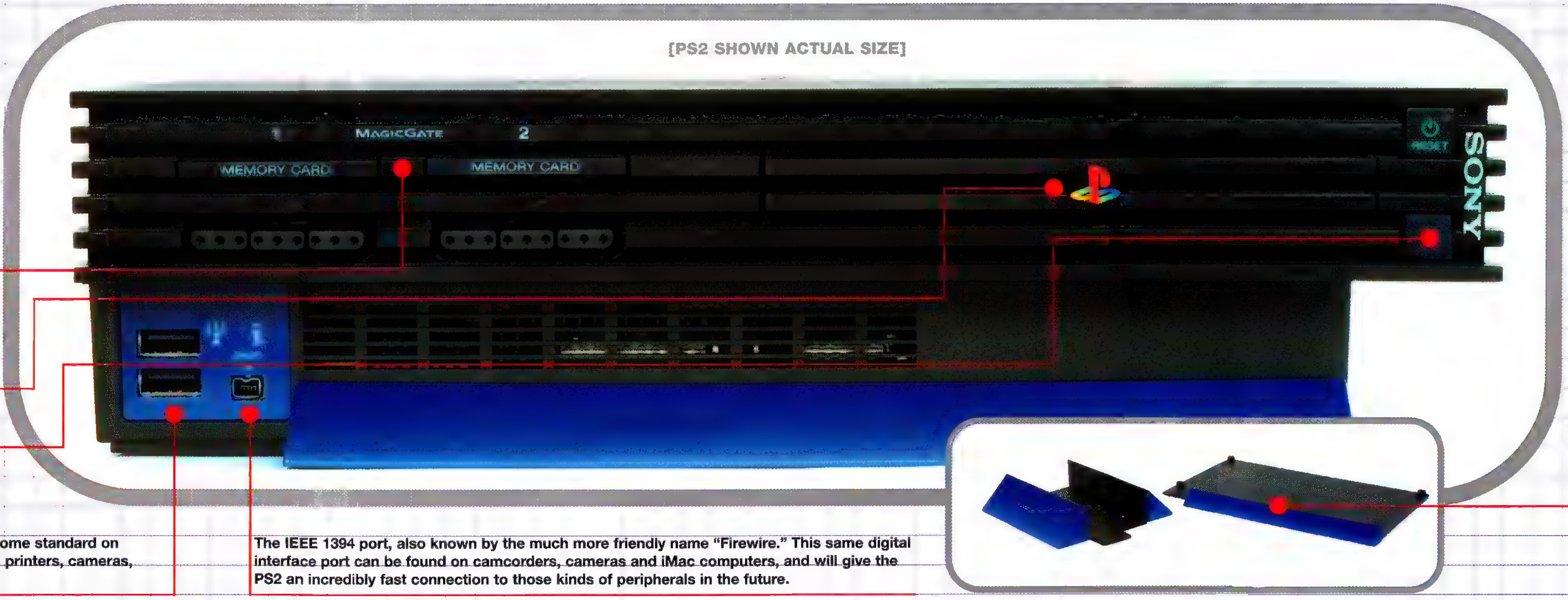
ダイレクトボタンの使い方(1)

操作パネルを表示しなくても、
コントローラのボタンで直接DVDプレーヤーを操作できます。

× 戻る

UTILITY DISK

The only CD that comes packed in with the PlayStation2 isn't a bunch of game demos (as was previously promised), but more or less an electric version of the instruction manual. It walks you through the use of various parts of the hardware, and also includes a short sample of DVD video and the PS2's DVD player driver so you can reinstall it to your memory card if you need to.


[PS2 SHOWN ACTUAL SIZE]

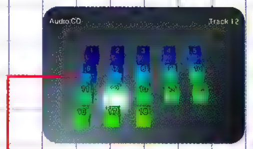
The controller ports and memory card slots, all the same size and shape as on the original PlayStation. Only two sets? Yup. Sony says they didn't include more controller ports in order to keep costs low.

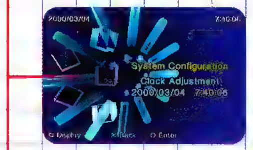
The good ol' PlayStation logo, which you can rotate easily to suit a vertical or horizontal configuration.

The light in the Reset button glows red when the system is idle, and green when it is active. The eject button has a blue light that flashes when the drive is opening or closing.

You might recognize these little buggers called USB ports—they come standard on modern PCs. All kinds of peripherals—mice, keyboards, scanners, printers, cameras, hard drives—can plug in here, quick and easy.

The IEEE 1394 port, also known by the much more friendly name "Firewire." This same digital interface port can be found on camcorders, cameras and iMac computers, and will give the PS2 an incredibly fast connection to those kinds of peripherals in the future.

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System Configuration

Clock Adjustment

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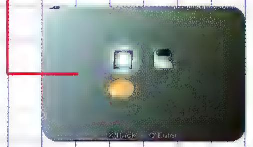


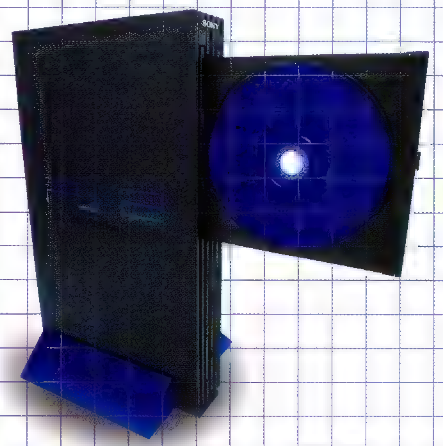
Here we have a pic of the PS2's CD player interface (top)—unfortunately even more boring than the PS1's. Next is a shot of a system settings screen (middle), which keeps up the "clear crystal and swirling lights" motif of all the system menus. And finally we see what the browser looks like (bottom), with a memory card, PocketStation and DVD in the PS2, all represented by icons.

Two different stands went on sale along with the PS2 in Japan, a horizontal and a vertical stand. The horizontal stand (about $9) lays under the PS2 and really doesn't do much except look nice, while the vertical stand (about $14) stabilizes the PS2 so it can stand on one end and save space.

Trip Hawkins, CEO of 3DO, on the PS2 to Newsweek

that fundamentally changes society in the same way the printing press did."

THE SYSTEM



THE DVD MOVIES

Unlike the Japanese PlayStation2, which requires a memory card file to play DVD movies, the U.S. version allows you to watch your favorite flicks right out of the box. If you've yet to watch a movie on DVD, you'll immediately see the giant increase in visual quality that it offers. And don't forget all those nifty extras such as trailers, behind the scenes footage and director's commentary, that can be found on many DVD releases.

COURAGE
LUCAS Arts
STAR WARS®
STARFIGHTER™

SKILL

HONOR

COURAGE
SKILL
HONOR
LUCAS Arts
STAR WARS
STARFIGHTER

THREE HEROES
ONE ENEMY
ALL ACTION

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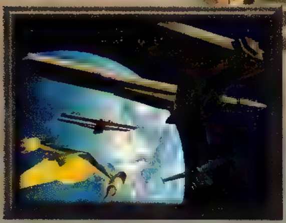
STAR WARS STARFIGHTER

PlayStation®2



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TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Animated Violence

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By Chris Johnston chris_johnston@ziffdavis.com
Mark MacDonald mark_macdonald@ziffdavis.com

Press Start The Hottest Gaming News on the Planet

Nintendo Goes Square

The Future of Nintendo is revealed all at once at Space World 2000

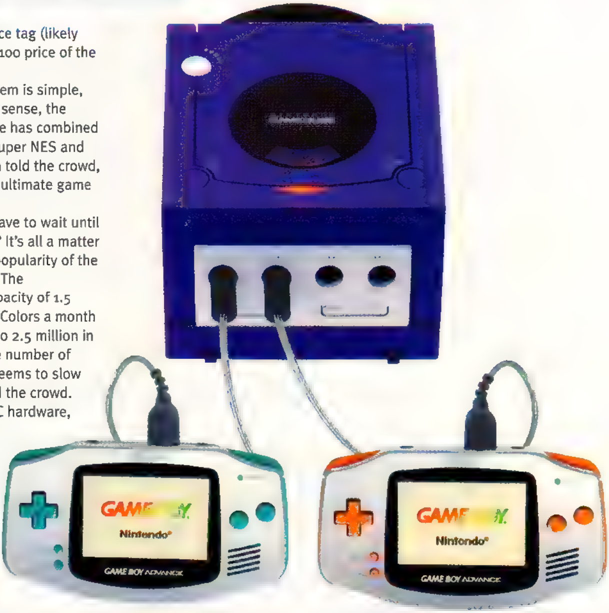
New hardware isn't unveiled often, and when two new systems debut in the same day, it's something to shout about. That's exactly what Nintendo did when they fulfilled every gamer's dream twice over at Space World 2000, held Aug. 25-27, at Makuhari Messe in Chiba, Japan. At a private industry-only event the day before the show Nintendo's unveiled their next-generation portable, Game Boy Advance. And—only during that private showing—Nintendo finally uncovered its next-generation home console, previously known as Dolphin or Starcube, now known as Gamecube.

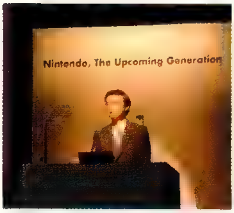
Game Boy Grows Up

Nintendo Co. Ltd.'s Executive Vice President Atsushi Asada took the stage first and introduced the crowd to the next level of Game Boy hardware, pulling a Game Boy Advance from his shirt pocket. Nintendo plans to release it in Japan on March 21, 2001 for ¥9800 (about $90). One million GBA hardware units are scheduled to be shipped between the launch date and the end of March, along with 10 games (although specific titles were not announced). GBA will ship to the U.S. and Europe in July 2001 for an unspecified price tag (likely close to the sub-$100 price of the Japanese system).

"This game system is simple, yet complete. In a sense, the Game Boy Advance has combined the strengths of Super NES and Game Boy," Asada told the crowd, "evolving into the ultimate game machine."

So why do we have to wait until next year for GBA? It's all a matter of the continued popularity of the Game Boy Color. "The manufacturing capacity of 1.5 million Game Boy Colors a month will be increased to 2.5 million in December, but the number of GBC sales never seems to slow down," Asada told the crowd. "Shortages of GBC hardware, especially in Europe, seem to continue. If the release of GBA was to be in this calendar year, a sufficient number could not be made at its launch due to a shortage of materials."





NCL's Genyo Takeda, introduces the world to the finer points of Nintendo Gamecube.

Gleaming the Cube

For the unveiling of the 'cube, Nintendo employed the help of two rogue magicians, who presented an empty, doorway-sized box, out of which—after a few turns and a few tricks—stepped five women with Gamecubes in their hands. After much applause, NCL's Director and General manager of Integrated Research and Development Division Genyo Takeda took the stage to introduce us to the finer points of the hardware and to apologize for the problems with the N64.

"Unlike the common philosophy of popularizing the hardware using games and then trying to dominate in other fields," Takeda said, taking an obvious jab at Sony's strategy with PlayStation 2, "Our goal is to create the ultimate hardware for playing games. The origin of the concept for Gamecube came from a reflection on ourselves. When we developed the N64, the thought was that software development for games would naturally become more difficult. This was interpreted as a kind of challenge to developers. But that was not the case. The N64 definitely had far superior capabilities in those days. However, in order to utilize them, special adjustments had to be made and developers said that it was difficult to work with N64."

"We view technology as a tool, used to create new entertainment. The gameplay should receive the main spotlight," Takeda said. The gameplay didn't receive the main spotlight that night, though. All the demonstration videos we saw (see the following pages for screens) were only referred to as demos and not confirmed titles. We won't get to see any near-finished games until E3 2001 in

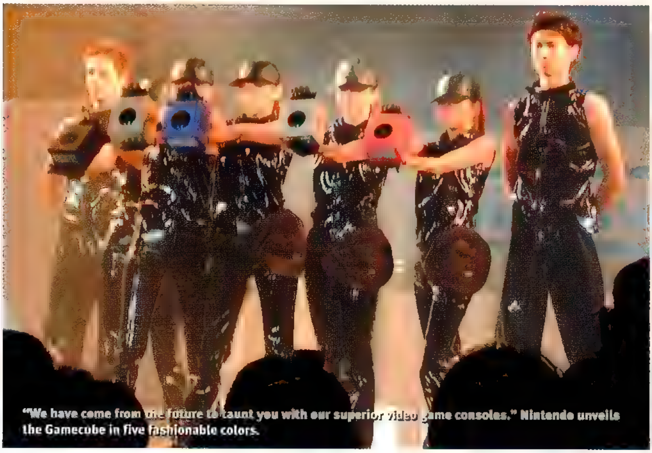
Los Angeles, May 17-19. Mario's creator Shigeru Miyamoto did step forth to demonstrate some of the nuances of the system's unique controller and to present a short demo titled 'Mario 128' (that was merely a tech demo). "If I showed you software today that was earth-shattering, I may regret it if someone else uses the same idea. After all, there is some time before the machine's release," Miyamoto told the crowd.

Gamecube will be released in Japan in July 2001, with five (undetermined) software titles. Nintendo did not announce a price for the system. Matsushita's own Gamecube/DVD player, which was rumored canceled in the Japanese press before being once again reconfirmed by the company, will launch simultaneously. Stateside gamers will experience the system when it launches here in October 2001.

N64-gotten?

The N64 also seems doomed to an uncertain fate, especially in Japan (though its games are still strong sellers). Despite a handful of promising titles from Nintendo and second parties (including Animal Forest, Treasure's Sin and Punishment, and Marigul's Echo Delta and Custom Robo V2—see N64 previews for more), the N64's library for this next year is looking pretty thin. Even Nintendo officials admitted that keeping the games coming between now and the Gamecube will be a challenge. We'll likely see a lot of the Japanese games shown at Space World 2000 show up stateside in 2001.

But enough depressing N64 talk—where's all the Gamecube and GBA info and games? Turn the page and find out what'll replace the PS2 in your just out-of-reach dreams.


"We have come from the future to taunt you with our superior video game consoles." Nintendo unveils the Gamecube in five fashionable colors.

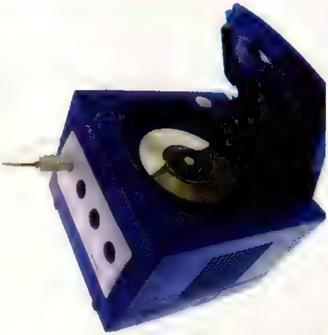
> **"We view technology as a tool, used to create new entertainment. The gameplay should receive the main spotlight."**

Game Boy Goes Mobile

The other big announcement at Space World was that of the Mobile GB System, an adapter that hooks the Game Boy (and soon Game Boy Advance) up to a cellular or PHS phone. You can then browse the Net, read e-mail or play games over the Net (the first game confirmed to use the system is Pokémon Crystal, found in this issue's Previews section).

Remember that DD thing?

The 64DD, released in Japan this past year, was conspicuous by its absence from this year's show. Any future game releases for the system are now up in the air. Miyamoto confirmed that the DD version of Zelda is complete—but when and if it'll ever see a release in Japan (much less the U.S.) is unknown.



How The Gamecube Stacks Up

Under The Hood

MPU ("Microprocessor Unit")

IBM Power PC "Gekko"
Manufacturing Process: 0.18 microns Copper Wire Technology
Clock Frequency: 405 MHz
CPU Capacity: 925 Dmips (Dhrystone 2.1)
Internal Data Precision: 32-Bit Integer & 64-Bit Floating-point
External Bus Bandwidth: 1.6GB/second(Peak) (32-Bit address, 64-Bit data bus202.5MHz)
Internal Cache: L1: Instruction 32KB, Data 32KB (8 way), L2: 256KB (2 way)

System LSI "Flipper"

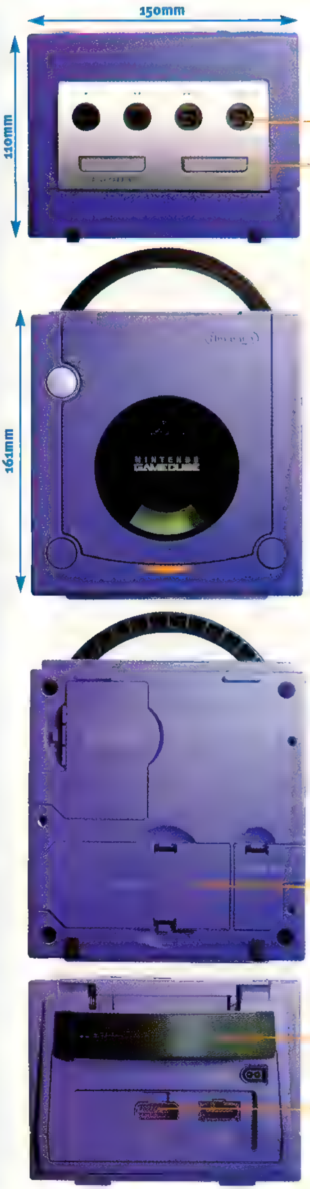
Manufacturing Process: 0.18 microns, NEC Embedded DRAM Process
Clock Frequency: 202.5MHz
Embedded Frame Buffer: Approx. 2MB Sustainable Latency: 5ns (1T-SRAM)
Embedded Texture Cache: Approx. 1MB Sustainable Latency: 5ns (1T-SRAM)
Texture Read Bandwidth: 12.8GB/second (Peak)
Main Memory Bandwidth: 3.2GB/second (Peak)
Color, Z Buffer: Each is 24 Bits
Image Processing Function: Fog, Subpixel Anti-aliasing, HW Light x8, Alpha Blending, Virtual Texture Design, Multi-texture Mapping/Bump/Environment Mapping, MIPMAP, Bilinear Filtering, Real-time Texture Decompression (S3TC), etc.

Other

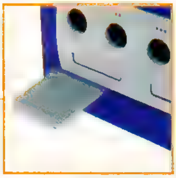
Sound Processor: Special 16-Bit DSP
Instruction Memory: 8KB RAM + 8KB ROM
Data Memory: 8KB RAM + 4KB ROM
Clock Frequency: 101.25 MHz
Maximum Number of Simultaneously Produced Sounds ADPCM: 64ch
Sampling Frequency: 48KHz
System Floating-point Arithmetic Capability: 13.0GFLOPS (Peak) (MPU, Geometry Engine, HW Lighting Total)
Actual Display Capability: 6 million to 12 million polygons/second (Display capability assuming actual game with complexity model, texture, etc.)
System Main Memory: 24MB
Sustainable Latency: 10ns or lower (1T-SRAM)
A-Memory: 16MB (100MHz DRAM)

Disc Drive Constant Angular Velocity (CAV) System

Average Access Time: 128ms
Data Transfer Speed: 16Mbps to 25Mbps



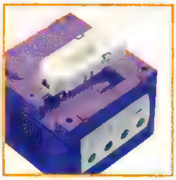
Game Boy Advance Adapter
You can use the Game Boy Advance as a private color screen for the Gamecube. Just plug it into a controller slot and you're ready to go. One of the uses specifically mentioned in Nintendo's presentation was the ability to use the GBA as a separate screen for selecting plays privately in sports games such as football.



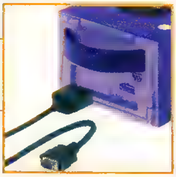
Digicard
There are two slots at the front of the machine for Digicards—Nintendo's Gamecube memory card. It stores 4 Megabits of information into a card that's smaller in size than a PlayStation memory card. While there are only two Digicard slots on the machine, Nintendo says there will be a way to swap them so four people can load data.

SD-Digicard Adapter
With this adapter, you can use Panasonic/Matsushita's postage stamp-sized SD (Secure Digital) Memory Card, compatible with digital cameras and music players, to store Gamecube data. To give you an idea of the increased storage capacity, one 64 Megabyte SD card holds about 128 times the data of one standard Digicard.

Modem Adapter
Gamecube has a slot on the bottom for a 56k modem, although it will not include one out of the box. Nintendo has not announced specific plans for Gamecube's online connectivity, but said they will do so when it makes sense to use as a tool in games. It's truly plug 'n' play—just snap it into the bottom and you're ready to go.



Broadband Adapter
Not to be left in the 20th century, Nintendo has also announced a Broadband Adapter to connect to future "fat pipe" networks such as cable modems and DSL. This allows for high-speed data transmission. The bottom of the system has two other ports—a high-speed parallel and a second serial. Uses for these haven't been specified.



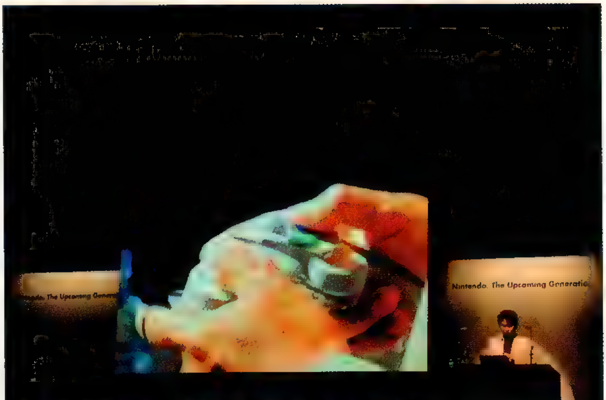
Digital Video Cable
In addition to the same A/V out connection that Nintendo's been using since the Super NES days, the back of the GC sports a Digital Video Out. This will support the D Terminal standard, compatible with the advanced digital broadcasting environment for DTV and HDTV. You can also see the handle on the back of the machine for easy carrying.

Nintendo Saves the Best for Last

After the dazzling hardware introduction, Shigeru followed with a demonstration of the Gamecube's controller (which he was instrumental in designing) using a real-time demo running on the Gamecube chipset. As he performed and explained the functions, the ghost you see in the background at the right belched out letters with each press of a button. The controller was designed with simplicity in mind—easy enough for a casual gamer to pick up and play without being intimidated by the number of buttons, yet with everything the experienced gamer will need to control more complex games with ease. Gone are the days of using "paks" to expand the controller—it already has the Rumble function built-in (no batteries required!). Miyamoto stated that while the controller design you see here is close to how the finished product will look when the Gamecube goes on sale, it is *not* the final, complete version; there are still undisclosed features that Nintendo won't reveal until E3 to prevent the competition from "borrowing" the design.

Games will come on small, proprietary, 8 cm-diameter discs developed in conjunction with Matsushita. The discs hold 1.5 gigabytes of data, and Nintendo believes that this format will eventually become a standard. By comparison, you could put a game 190 times the size of Super Mario 64 on the disc, and it's pocket-sized. Nintendo has also employed Matsushita's technology to protect the discs from being illegally copied. The Gamecube Concept Book handed out after the demonstration mentions the possibility that this disc format may be used for future portable game machines.

Another big chunk of Miyamoto's presentation stressed how easy Gamecube was to develop for. In order to make creating games as easy as possible, Nintendo integrated 1T-RAM technology into the main memory and Graphics LSI Mixed Memory. This, along with a secondary memory cache in the MPU removes bottlenecks developers ran into with the N64. Miyamoto and other Nintendo representatives repeatedly acknowledged (and even apologized for) how difficult N64 development has been, and the Gamecube was designed from conception to address those shortcomings. Later in an interview with *EGM*, Nintendo of America VP of Marketing and Corporate Communications George Harrison confirmed that Nintendo was actively pursuing third parties for Gamecube development including big names like Namco, Capcom, Square and Enix, who either skipped the N64 or released only token games for it.

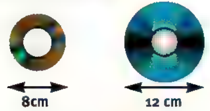


Nintendo. The Upcoming Generation
Nintendo. The Upcoming Genera

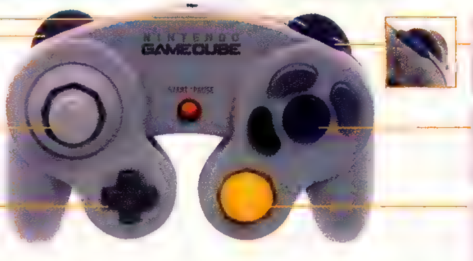
Shigeru Miyamoto demonstrates the benefits of the Gamecube's controller. It may look like a monster, but it's about the size of the PlayStation's now-classic Dual Shock.

Size Matters?

The Gamecube disc holds almost double the amount of data of a CD-ROM—1.5 GB compared to 650 MB. Definitely an advantage, but not quite the amount of space of a DVD-ROM (which holds 4.9 GB).



The Gamecube controller finally exposed!



L and R buttons
The L and R triggers are now analog, like the Dreamcast and PS2's shoulder buttons, and include a groove for your finger.

Analog stick
This part hasn't changed much from the N64's controller, except that it has been moved to the main position for easier access.

Digital pad
The ol' D-pad has been moved down, but is still easily accessible for games that'll use it. No, it does not have any analog functions.

Z Trigger
The Z Trigger from the N64 controller has been moved to the top of the controller, just in front of the right shoulder button.

A, B, X and Y buttons
'A' might be the main button, but the idea here is that you can feel which button is which without looking down at the controller.

C button
Really a secondary analog or camera button, 'C' has been moved and altered so that it too is easily distinguishable from the rest.

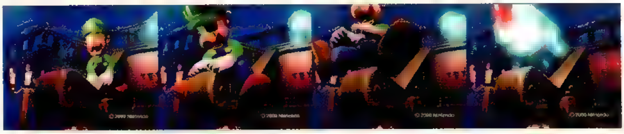
BIRD IS THE WORD

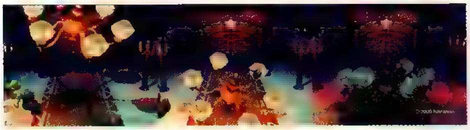
Nintendo's wireless Gamecube controller, **Wavebird**, can be played from a maximum distance of 10 meters. Up to four Wavebirds can be used on one system simultaneously.

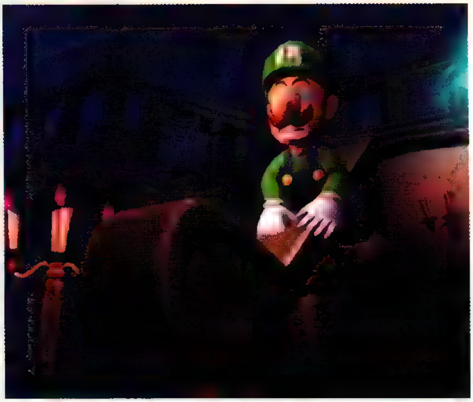
Editor's Note: The images on the next three pages are demonstrations of the Gamecube hardware, and do not represent announced game titles.

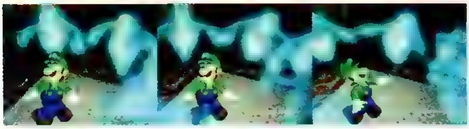
Luigi's Mansion

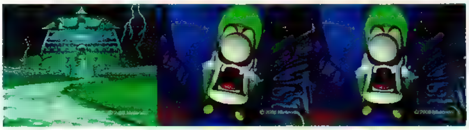
Officially titled Luigi's Mansion, in this demo we see the other Super Mario brother dodging ghosts and a falling chandelier. This is probably a very good indication of stuff we'll be seeing next year.



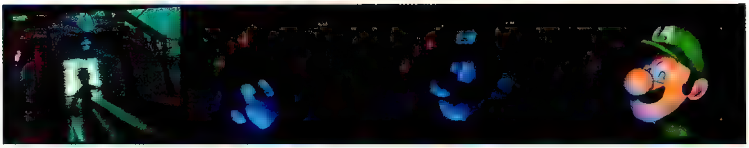


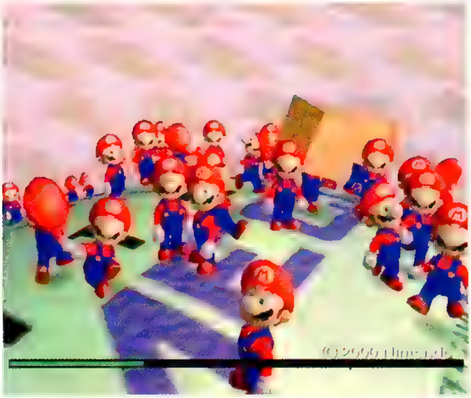


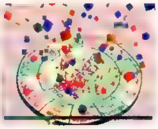




The images at right are from video footage presented only during the private showing of the Gamecube the day before Space World opened. This sequence of Luigi being revealed inside the mansion was particularly cool—it sent a shiver down our spines.

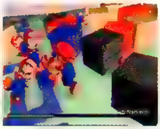


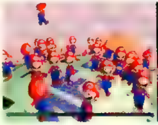


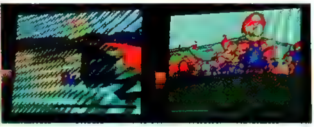


Super Mario 128

Besides Miyamoto's controller demo, the only other live, real-time demonstration of the Gamecube's power was Super Mario 128. The blocks you see in this picture, when viewed from afar, were the pixels that made up the original Mario sprite from Super Mario Bros. on the NES. A single Mario (using the exact character model from Mario 64) emerged from underneath one of the blocks. As he picked up another block, another Mario emerged from inside that block, and so on and so on until 128 Marios were on the screen together (each acting and rendered independently). Notice that the hills in these pictures are completely smooth—no polygon "seams" that are normally found in other 3D games.





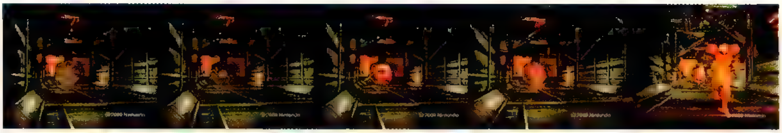


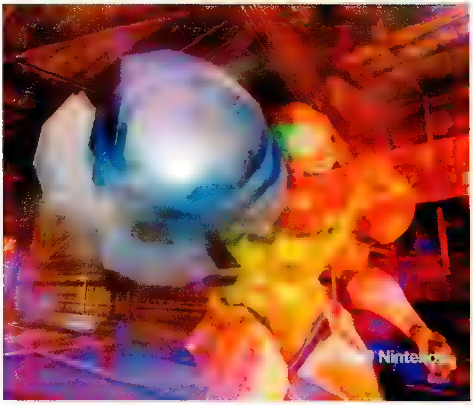
BUSTED!

Recognize this man? It's none other than Yuji Naka, Sonic Team's fearless leader, scopin' out the competition's latest hardware. Or does he have other ideas? Hmmm...

Metroid

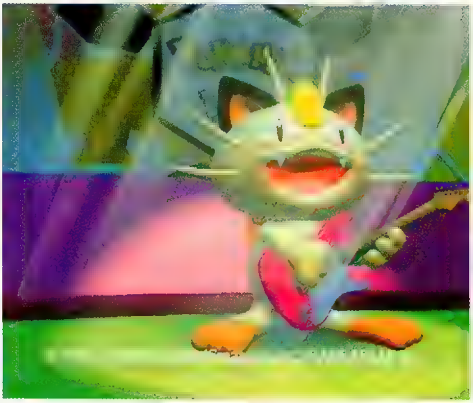
Samus makes a cameo in the Gamecube demo reel, seen here running from a horde of nasty critters.

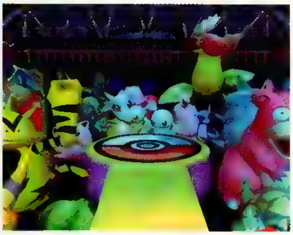




Meowth's Party

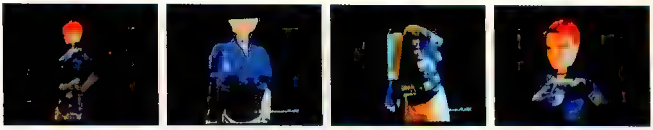
First seen at the end of the Pokémon cartoon on Kids WB!, this sequence of prancin' and dancin' Pokémon was rendered using the exact same polygon models from Pokémon Stadium. Here we see it running in real time on the Gamecube hardware.





Joanna Dark

Remember a little N64 game called Perfect Dark? Well, this render of Joanna looks like a quickly thrown-together but clear sign that Rare is onboard Gamecube development.



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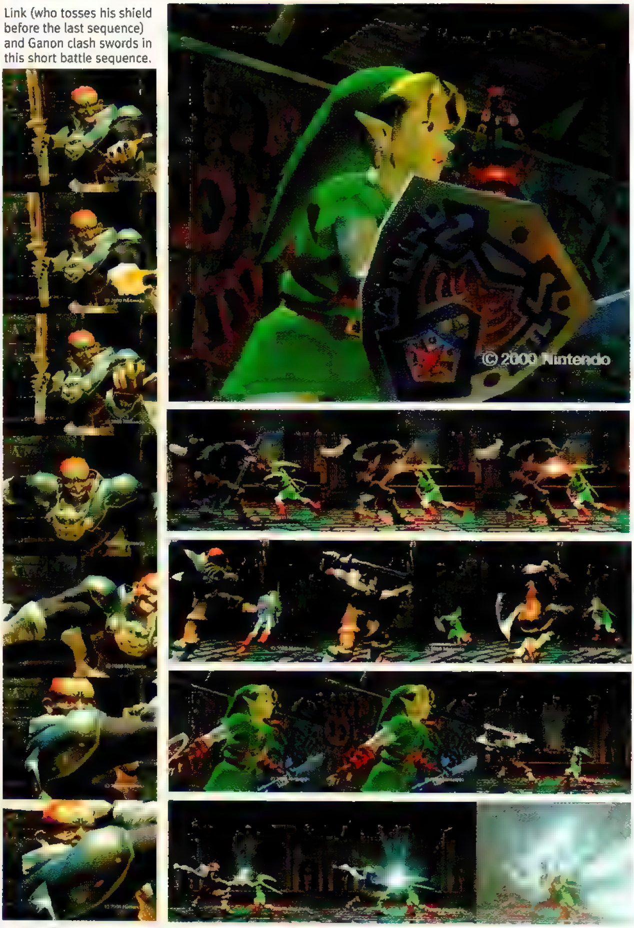
Legend of Zelda

Link (who tosses his shield before the last sequence) and Ganon clash swords in this short battle sequence.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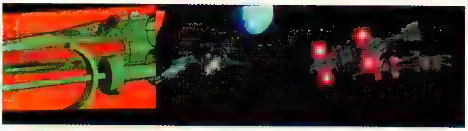
Star Wars

LucasArts prepared this brief X-Wing demo, which will reportedly be used in the next Shadows of the Empire game.



Wave Race

Lookin' better than ever, this Wave Race demo featured amazingly realistic water reflections and Dolphins diving out of the way.

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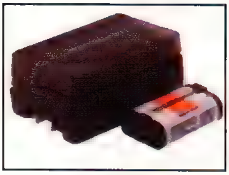
Game Boy Finally Advances

It may not come through as clearly on these pages, but the GBA is one tiny game system. It's about the same size as a GBC, held horizontally instead of vertically, and much thinner (easily stored in a pocket), but with a larger screen. Two holes on either side of the Link Cable port at the top of the system are for peripherals to "lock" on (including lights, magnifying covers, etc.) that will be designed for the system later. There is no infrared communications port on the GBA, and no backlight (which Nintendo claims is to extend battery life; we say look for GBA Light in a couple years).

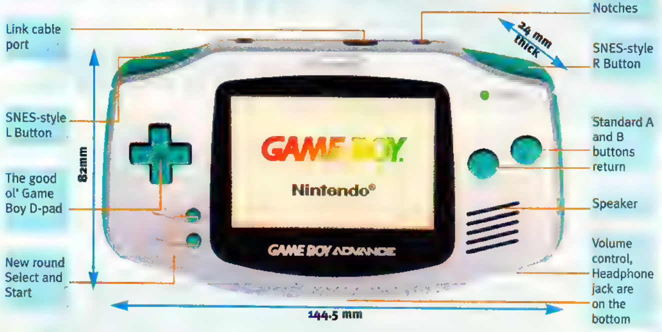


In other battery news, Nintendo will release a Battery Pak and Charger for the system that gives 10 hours of GBA play time with a two-hour charge.

The system's graphics are very close to that of the Super NES. 16-Bit classics like Mario Kart and F-Zero are already being developed for the system, with truckloads more on the way. Unfortunately, we didn't get a glimpse of any Game Boy or Game Boy Color games running on the system to see how the backward compatibility works. We've heard two different stories: One that regular GBC screens are "stretched" to fit the GBA screen (which seems rather odd), and another that black or colored bars fill the sides of the screen, limiting it to regular GBC resolution. Check out the next few pages for all the games we know of so far (only a select few were playable at the show) and stay tuned for more as the GBA release approaches.

NCL Executive VP Atsushi Asada introduces the world to Nintendo's next-generation portable, Game Boy Advance.

Game Boy Advance Breakdown

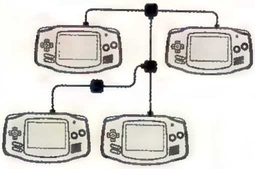


GBA By The Numbers

LCD: Reflective TFT Color LCD
Screen Size: 40.8mm x 61.2mm
Resolution: 240 x 160 dots
Display Capability: 32,000 colors
CPU: 32-Bit RISC-CPU + 8-Bit CISC-CPU
Memory: 32 Kbyte WRAM + 96 Kbyte VRAM (in CPU) 256 Kbyte WRAM (external of CPU)
Sound: Speaker, Headphone Terminal
Communication Function: Multiplay by up to four people possible with Game Boy Advance Communication Cable
Power Supply: 2 AA Alkaline Batteries or special Battery Pak
Battery Life: 2 AA Alkaline Batteries: Approx. 15 hours
Battery Pak: Approx. 10 hours
Power Consumption: Approx. 0.6W
Main Unit Weight: Approx. 140g
Game Pak: Max. of 256Mbits(Game Boy Advance Only) Compatible with Game Boy/Game Boy Color and Game Boy Advance Game Paks
Forecasted Price: 9,800 yen (approx. $90)
Estimated date of sale: Japan: March 21, 2001 U.S. and Europe: July, 2001

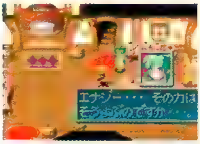
4 From the Start

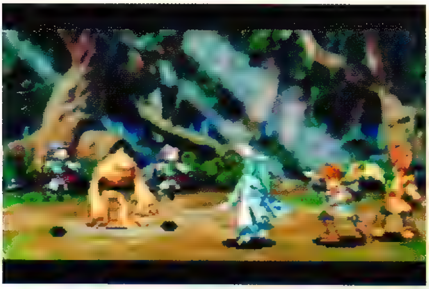
The GBA Communication Cable allows for four-player action right out of the box. Plus, **you can play a four-player game like Mario Kart Advance with just one copy of the game**—which wasn't possible before with previous versions of the GB hardware.

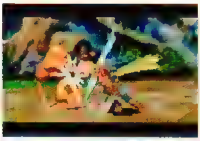


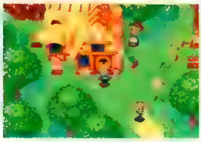
Golden Sun

RPG fans who still remember the Genesis days and the Shining Force series should recognize Camelot's upcoming GBA RPG Golden Sun (30% complete). While it uses sprites and looks 2D, the battles actually employ a cool pseudo-3D effect—the angle whips around from your party's to the enemies' perspective, depending on who is attacking. The music sounded great, and the crisp graphics gave us more faith in the GBA—one of the best games on display and definitely one to look forward to.



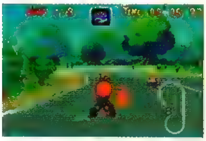


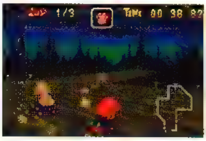




Mario Kart Advance

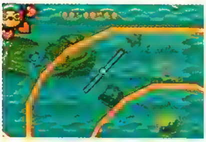
Somewhere between the original Super Mario Kart and the N64 version in terms of graphics, and identical to both in terms of gameplay, Mario Kart Advance lets one to four players link up and battle it out on the Mode 7-style racetrack. Easily the best of Nintendo's GBA titles so far, and still only 50% complete.

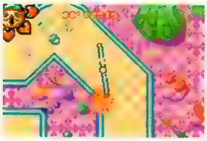


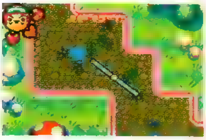


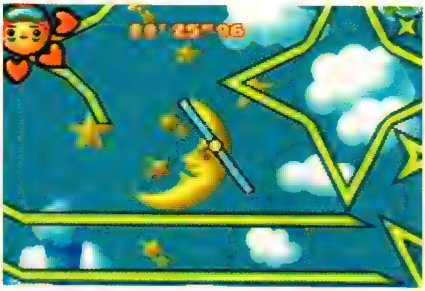
Kuru Kuru Kuru Rin

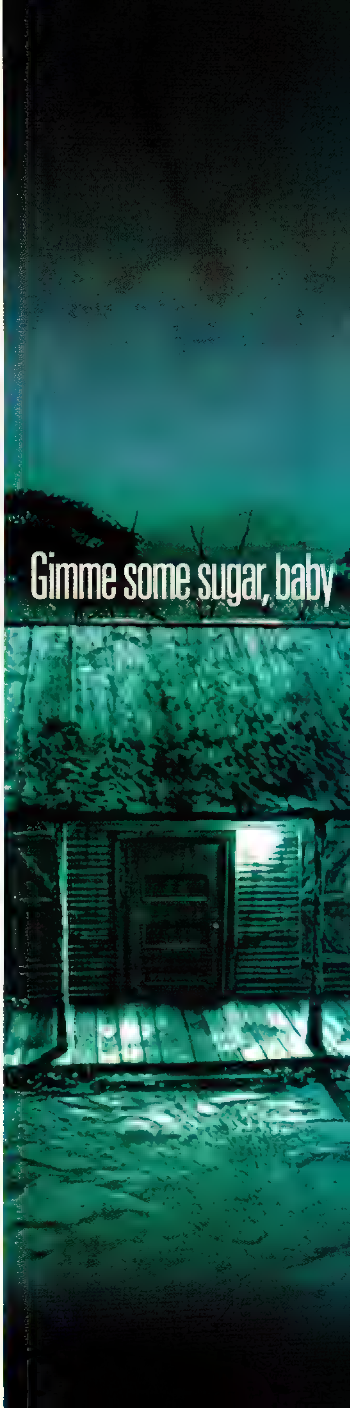
Remember that PlayStation game Irritating Stick? No? Well, this is sort of like that, except that you must steer a constantly clockwise-twirling stick through paths without touching the walls. Timing your movements is key, as you'll have to squeeze through some tight spots. Touch a wall and you'll begin to lose energy, but there are areas in each stage where you can take a moment to refill your life. A fun little puzzle game by Nintendo (60% complete), but nothing that really uses the GBA's power.

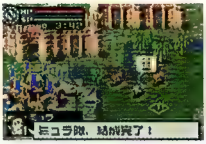








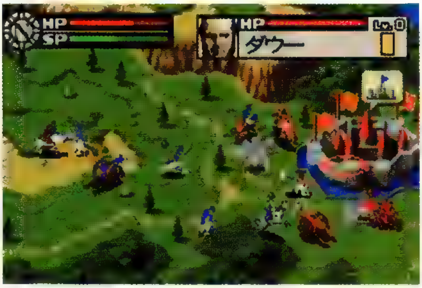




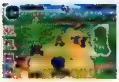
990pt
HP 160
Boo!
Good!

Napoleon

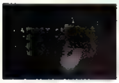
In this wartime strategy game for one or two players, you take on the role of Napoleon, French general and emperor in the early 19th century. Your ultimate goal is to take over Europe—to do this you've got to uphold your soldiers' willingness to fight by expanding your kingdom and rewarding your troops after battle. You can control individual soldiers or put them under the watch of your commanders. They will give you advice and regular reports on how their units are faring in battle.



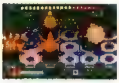
Third-Party GBA Titles



Konami's Wacky Racing - Konami
Join famous Konami characters from the Parodius, Goemon, Twinbee and Metal Gear games (among others) in this racing/battle title. Wacky Racing looked and played just like Mario Kart Advance, from the Mode 7 tracks to the shoulder buttons for jumping into power slides. After choosing your character, you select a level also based on any game (we chose the Metal Gear Solid level, which had lots of crate obstacles and a nice variation on the famous MGS theme song). Cool, but another cart racer?



Silent Hill - Konami
If you're expecting a carbon copy of the PlayStation adventure game, you'll be disappointed. Silent Hill for the GBA is an "interactive novel"—that means text pasted over still screens, where you choose between different actions at crucial points—kinda like the old Twist-A-Plot books. Small bits of FMV, however, *were* right from the PS game, and were especially impressive to see on the small screen (and on a cartridge!). Still, not what we were hoping for from Konami.



Rockman EXE - Capcom
Capcom brings Mega Man (known as Rockman in Japan) to the GBA, but throws away the old platformer formula. Instead, you're a boy who must enter a computer network and defeat viruses constructed by Dr. Wily. Basically, you move up and down on three planes, shooting enemies who appear on each of them, depleting their hit points. From what we played at the show, it was more RPG than action game, and is going to need a *lot* of work if its going to get as good as we expect from the blue bomber.

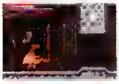
WHOLE LOTTA LOVE

The number of Game Boy Advance demo units Nintendo had on display at Space World 2000.

140

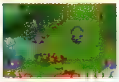
Advance Word

We have no info and only one tiny picture of each of these games, but they were just too good not to pass along. Hopefully we'll know more about these titles soon, especially Castlevania and F-Zero!



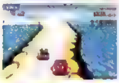
Castlevania: Circle of the Moon - Konami

Dokapon - Asmik Ace



Doraemon - Epoch

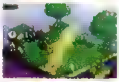
Fire Emblem - Nintendo



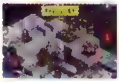
F-Zero Advance - Nintendo

Game Boy Wars Advance - Nintendo

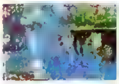
Golf Master - Konami



Monster Breed - Konami



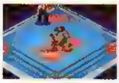
Tactics Ogre - Nintendo



Pinopi's Adventure - Hudson

Pocket GT Advance - MTO

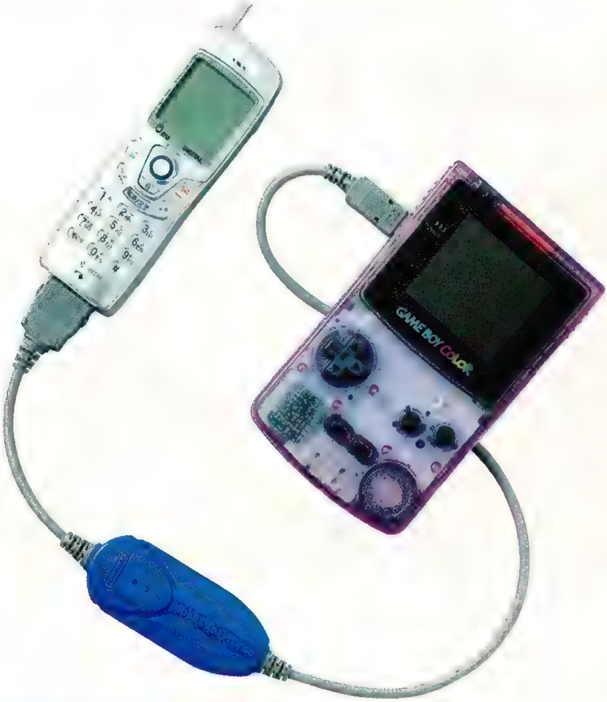
Bomberman Story - Hudson

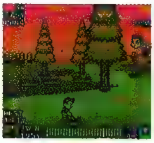


Fire Pro Wrestling Advance - Spike

Top Gear Advance - Kotobuki Systems

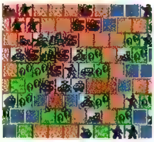
Game Boy Goes Mobile


GAME BOY COLOR



Staying Connected

Using the Mobile Adapter GB, you can use a PHS or cellular phone to connect to the Internet and play games online. Shown here (counterclockwise from top left) are a proposed GB Net Golf game, Game Boy Wars Mobile, an e-mail application, Net browser (both of which come in the Mobile Starter Game Pak, bundled with the Mobile Adapter GB). Pokémon Crystal (below right) lets you trade and battle over phone lines. It all goes on sale Dec. 14 for 5800 yen (about $54). Because of conflicting U.S. cell phone standards, Nintendo is still considering if and how to bring the connector here—one option they are looking at is using standard phone lines instead.



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ホームページ

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ブラッキー♂L42
141/141
▶たたかう　リュック
ポケモン　にげる

ケーブルと　モバイル　どちらを
つかって　こうかん　しますか？

Who's laughing now?

SEGA!

That's right, the trademark "Sega!" scream that ended all of the company's commercials back in the glory days of the Genesis (and lasted a bit into that whole Saturn mess) is back in a new series of ads that started running Sept. 7 during MTV's Video Music Awards. All we can say is it's about frickin' time. Sega!

Sega's Game Plan

The Price Drop. The New Games. The New Attitude.

With Nintendo finally making noise at Space World, Sony about to launch its PlayStation 2, and Microsoft charming its way into the console biz, Sega is busy reminding the world that its Dreamcast is kicking off a gaming revolution. "That box there doesn't have a modem," Charlie Bellfield, Sega of America's director of communications, told us while pointing at the PlayStation 2. "Xbox doesn't have a modem. Sega is an online-entertainment company, and our focus is giving you great online content."

By the time you read this, you may have already tried Sega's first potential online killer app: NFL 2K1, which hit Sept. 7, the same day SegaNet went live (check back next month for a full review of NFL 2K1 and SegaNet). But what's next? We asked Bellfield what Sega has up its sleeve for the rest of the year and beyond.

- **What first-party online games hit next?** Quake III Arena, which arrives in stores Oct. 10., will be the next big game to hit SegaNet, followed by NBA 2K1 on Oct. 31. Next up is Phantasy Star in January 2001. Shortly after, we'll get 18 Wheeler American Pro Trucker (you read right—this will be a network title), followed by Outtrigger in March 2001 or so. And we haven't even mentioned all the third-party online games—such as Unreal Tournament—that'll hit this year. Bellfield said to expect at least a dozen first- and third-party network games by the end of this year.

- **And what about that mouse for Quake III Arena?** This handy gizmo launches a few days before QIII in October.

- **When can we use the microphone for more just than jibber-jabbering with Seaman?** Apparently by this Christmas, you'll be able to use the mike for voice-to-voice communication over the Internet with other SegaNet users (kinda like an Internet phone). And Visual Concepts is hoping to include voice chat in next year's NFL 2K2.

- **When do we get the LAN/Ethernet adapter?** Bellfield said this peripheral—which snaps into the same slot used by the modem now—will arrive here this fall. Sega is working with Genuity (formerly GTE Internetworking) to ready a broadband DSL connection to SegaNet. If you already have a cable or other broadband connection for your PC, you can simply unplug the ethernet plug from your computer (or run a cable from your ethernet hub, if you have one) and snap it into the LAN/Ethernet adapter, which will autodetect your connection and begin working immediately. Quake III Arena will be the first game to support the adapter (NFL 2K1 lacks the necessary drivers). Bellfield asserted we can expect speed-required content such as streaming video in Sega online titles once broadband becomes more commonplace.

"Sega is an online-entertainment company, our focus is giving you great online content."

Oh, and the LAN/Ethernet adapter can also be used to create a local-area network between several Dreamcasts. Start gearing up for your LAN party now.

- **And the ZIP drive?** It's set for a winter release, not long after the ethernet adapter.

- **What about those wonderful toys—the camera and MP3-playing VMU?** Unfortunately, Sega has no firm release info on these gadgets, other than to say expect them within the next six months. The Dreamcast Camera (which was just released in Japan as the Dreameye) will act as a stand-alone digital camera or provide full-motion video when hooked to the Dreamcast. The camera will reportedly be redesigned for the U.S. market.

The MP3 VMU, on the other hand, has been scratched altogether. Instead, Sega will release a USB adapter for the DC controller port, letting you jack in whatever MP3 player you want. "The costs of bringing a unique VMU player, although competitive a year ago, isn't anymore," Bellfield told us. "VMU players have really dropped in price. We'll leave the manufacturing up to the Diamonds and Creative Labs out there."

Sega's New Deal

SEGA.NET
GET YOURSELF CONNECTED

We all knew it was coming, and it finally happened on August 31—Sega dropped the Dreamcast's price to $149. So what does that mean for the $200 rebate program Sega planned for SegaNet subscribers? Simple: Sign up for SegaNet now and get a rebate check for $150 (shipped to you with a free keyboard) instead of the original $200 that Sega announced months before the price drop.

But before you begin accusing Sega of being cheapskates, bear in mind that Sega has changed the terms of the rebate deal, too. Now, you only need to sign up for an 18-month commitment to SegaNet to get the rebate instead of the original term of two years. And Sega is also offering a 50-hour free trial of the SegaNet service. All you gotta do is buy NFL 2K1 or Quake III Arena to take advantage of the offer (it's included with these games). "Sega's job is to remove any barriers for you the gamer to go online and sign up for the service and play great games," Bellfield said.

Head to www.sega.net or call 1-800-688-8460 for more info on Sega's ISP and rebate offer.

Oh, and About Those Man-Ass Ads...

After getting piles of angry letters from gamers and parents, we had to ask: What's the deal with Sega's Virtua Tennis ad? (You know, the one with the fat naked guys hanging out in a posh locker room.) "Tennis can be fun for anybody," Bellfield said in defense of the ad, which is also churning up plenty of ire in Internet newsgroups. "That ad was poking fun and pointing the finger at the country-club set who believe they are the purveyor of tennis. But our ads are not about being irreverent to the point where we have no connection with the game. Our ads are about really standing out in a crowded space in the press."

Xbox: Microsoft Secures Developers

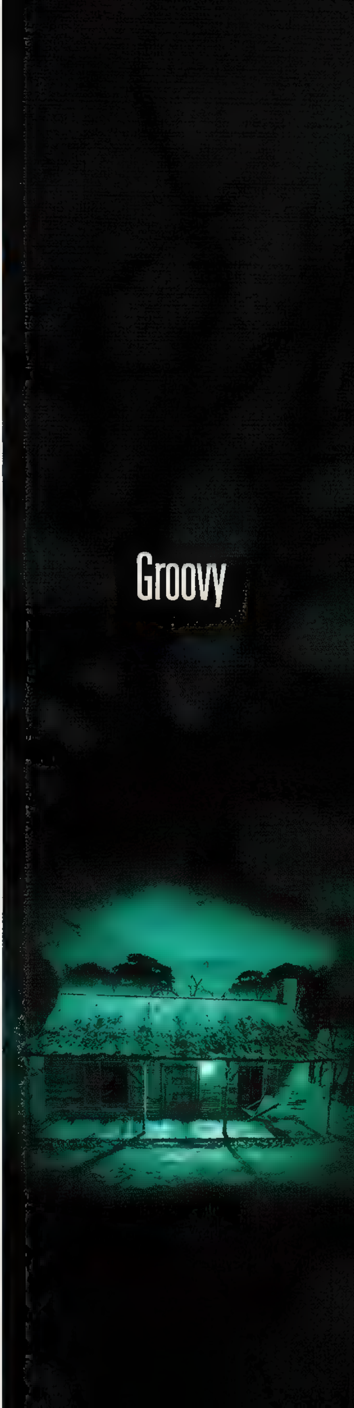
If you thought making the decision between DC and PS2 was tough this year, just wait until 2001. By this time next year we'll be sizing up the Gamecube and Xbox launches. To stay fresh in everyone's mind, Microsoft announced a list of 17 second-party developers (spread between console and PC veterans) working on Xbox projects to be released under Microsoft's label.

Announcements regarding Japanese developers could come as soon as the fall Tokyo Game Show in late September.

We've also confirmed that the design of the console is finished and ready to go. Hints have been dropped that it'll be in line with the PS2's look—more stereo component than video game machine—and that the controller may sport expansion slots similar to that of the DC controller.

Microsoft Second-Party Developers

- **Lionhead Satellites**
- **Universal Interactive Studios**
- **Stormfront Studios**
- **Kodiak Interactive Software Studios, Inc.**
- **Totally Games**
- **Rainbow Studios**
- **Artificial Mind and Movement**
- **Boss Game Studios**
- **Climax Development, Ltd.**
- **Digital Illusions**
- **High Voltage Software**
- **KnowWonder Digital Media Works**
- **Pipeworks Software, Inc.**
- **Pseudo Interactive, Inc.**
- **Tremor Entertainment**
- **VR1 Entertainment (Circadence Corp.)**



NAME'S ASH...
HOUSEWARES
MATURE
M
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB
ANIMATED BLOOD & GORE
ANIMATED VIOLENCE

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HAIL TO THE KING

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AND DEADITES, OH MY!

■

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WITH A WEAPON IN EACH HAND.

■

FIGHT EVIL ACROSS THE SPANS OF TIME: FROM THE
INFAMOUS CABIN TO ANCIENT DAMASCUS.

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BRUCE CAMPBELL AS ASH!

Screenshots from Sega Dreamcast

PlayStation

Dreamcast

WINDOWS 95/98

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ALL LINED UP

On August 26, Dragon Quest fans all over Japan lined up to buy the seventh game in the series (this time for PlayStation). Sales the first day reportedly totalled 1.8 million units. Enix expects to ship over 4 million in Japan.

IMPORT CALENDAR

Onimusha

Import Pick of the Month: Onimusha
Capcom brings its survival horror universe to the PS2 in this new adventure game loosely based on historical characters and events. The polygonal characters and prerendered backgrounds look a lot like Resident Evil, but Capcom promises that the gameplay will hold some surprises.

PlayStation

10/5	Kamurai, Namco (RPG)
10/26	Fist of the North Star, Bandai (Action)

PlayStation 2

10/12	MotoGP, Namco (Racing)
11/11	Onimusha, Capcom (Adventure)
11/11	Silent Scope, Konami (Action)

Dreamcast

10/5	Eternal Arcadia, Sega (RPG)
10/5	Eternal Arcadria Limited Box, Sega (RPG)
10/12	18 Wheeler, Sega (Racing)
10/19	Napple Tale, Sega (Action/RPG)
10/19	Sega Marine Fishing, Sega (Sports)
10/26	Sega Tetris, Sega (Puzzle)
Oct.	Silent Scope, Konami (Action)

Nintendo 64

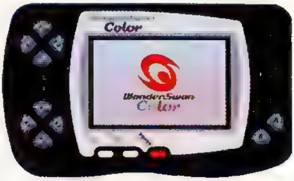
Oct.	Sin and Punishment, Nintendo (Action)
11/27	Viewpoint 2064, Sammy (Shooter)
Nov.	Custom Robo V2, Nintendo (Action)

Game Boy

10/31	Daikatana, Kemco(Action/RPG)
Oct.	Phantom Zonar, Nintendo (RPG)
11/16	Dance Dance Revolution GB2, Konami (Music)
Nov.	Mario Tennis, Nintendo (Sports)

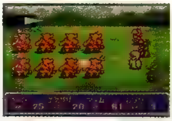
*Schedule subject to change without notice. Consult your local import game store for the latest release information.

WonderSwan Color Takes Flight



Nintendo wasn't the only company showing off a new handheld in Japan this month. Just as we closed this issue, Bandai revealed the WonderSwan Color, an upgraded version of their popular black-and-white WonderSwan handheld. This new color-enabled version of the hardware (which is backward compatible with all original WonderSwan games) is capable of 241 colors on screen from a palette of 4096, all at a 224x114 pixel resolution. It will be powered by one AA battery, which Bandai claims will last for 20 hours of play. Most exciting of all, reports (unconfirmed as we go to press) are coming in that the WSC is definitely coming to the U.S. It will be available in five different colors when it goes on sale this December in Japan for ¥6800 (about $65).

The original WonderSwan has been a relative success across the Pacific, where its tiny size (about 5" x 3"), light weight (95 grams), low price (about $45) and big games (Beatmania, Super Robot Wars, Chocobo's Mysterious Dungeon) helped it capture a respectable chunk of the handheld market (but still a distant second to the Game Boy). Almost exactly the same size and shape as the original, and launching well before the Game Boy Advance, the WonderSwan Color would seem to have a good chance at success there as well. Square is working on upgraded versions of Final Fantasy I, II and III (with other FF games up to part VI planned). Bandai also showed a USB cable for the WSC, which will allow it to connect to cell phones, PCs and the PS2. Look for more on the WonderSwan Color and any U.S. launch details next issue.



Square's early Final Fantasy games have been remixed (FFIII shown here) for the new WS Color.

Tidbits...

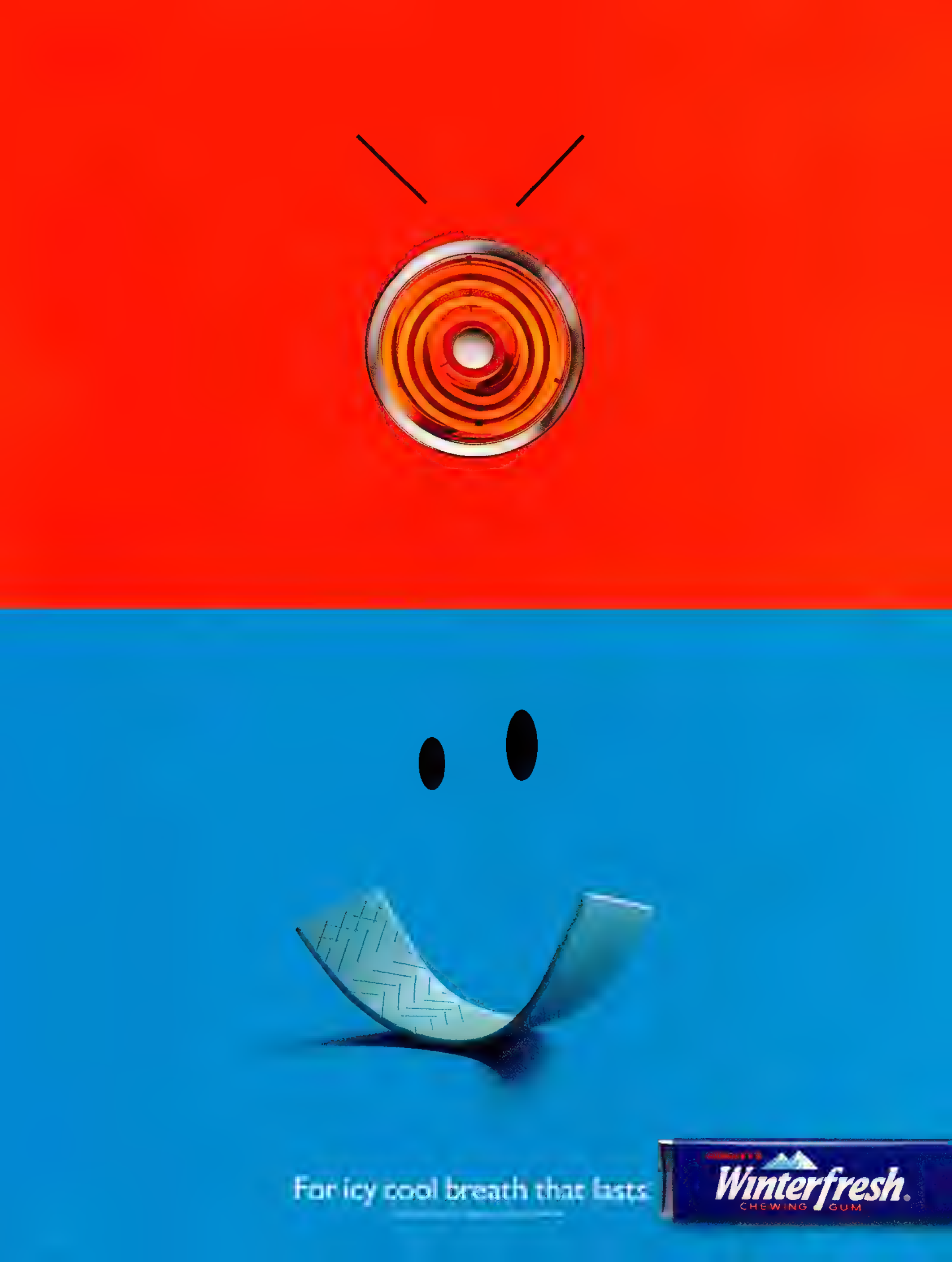
Square to Continue Going Hollywood
Square and Columbia Pictures are planning to jointly produce three more computer-generated movies following the release of Final Fantasy: The Movie in 2001. Square's U.S. unit will produce the CG films and use the technology implemented in the upcoming FF movie. In other movie news, the third Pokemon flick—based on the Gold and Silver games—will hit the U.S. in spring 2001.

LucasArts Makes Nice With THQ
LucasArts inked a deal that grants THQ worldwide rights to publish games based on Indiana Jones and Star Wars for the Game Boy Color and Game Boy Advance. Obi-Wan's Adventures, due in fall 2000, and Indiana Jones and the Infernal Machine, due in spring 2001, will be the first two LucasArts-developed games that THQ will publish on the GBC. Four Game Boy Advance titles will follow.

I Choose You, C:/Windows!
As if it hadn't infiltrated every facet of everyday life, Pokémon will now take over your hard drive. The Pikachu virus will appear in the form of an executable file with a Pikachu icon. When opened, it re-instructs your autoexec.bat file to erase your Windows directory upon restarting, so if you happen to "catch it," check your autoexec to make sure it hasn't been modified before you shut down.

Pad Pad Revolution
Tired of having to use those weak third-party pads to play Dance Dance Revolution at home? Konamistyle, Konami's online store (www.konamistyle.com) is polling interest on whether they should produce an arcade-replica pad for use at home. Fifty-five pounds of stainless steel and LEDs, the unit will be available online and in retail stores if response is positive. At $1,800 a pop, we'll see who the real hardcore dancers are! Konami has confirmed that its mega-popular (in Japan, anyway) Dance Dance Revolution PlayStation game is headed to the states in January.

Raymanbow Six?
Red Storm, producers of Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six and Rogue Spear games, was acquired by Ubi Soft (Rayman, Evolution 2) earlier this fall. Ubi Soft explains the acquisition as an important step in becoming "one of the world's top five publishers." The company hopes its association with Red Storm will broaden its capabilities and increase its presence in the U.S. market.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NEW FOR SEGA DREAMCAST

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB Animated Violence

Dreamcast™

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The Carnage Begins November 2000
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Q-Mann

Quartermann - Game Gossip & Speculation

Wowzers. Got me a spread in the magazine this month—yee haw! You know what that means, don't you? An overflowing bowl of industry rumor and dish, baby. So let's just go ahead and jump into it, eh?

...Remember a few months ago when yours truly said that **Mother 3** had been put on the D.O.A. list? Well it's finally been confirmed. Miyamoto told a roundtable of American and Euro press at Space World that had they had an assurance that **500,000 U.S. gamers** would've bought it they might've reconsidered canning it. Hrmm, hey guys over at **starmen.net, get crackin'!** Ah, it's probably too late...Star Fox coming for Gamecube? Sure is! Yes!

...Oh how the Q loves the Daytona. I remember hearing of a **Daytona 2 DC port** a long time ago, but only recently has it come to fruition. A playable version's now ready, but apparently there's a slight problem. Seems that **Sega doesn't have the Daytona license** (the arcade game was co-published by EA). So they've been checking around with publishers of other Daytona games (either Hasbro or Sierra—EA already said no) to see if they will do the game. At ECTS, Sega was showing **a video of Daytona Online** so you know we'll see it soon...

...**ToeJam & Earl,** come back!!!! The fine people at **Visual Concepts are now helping the original funky duo make a triumphant return** to game screens everywhere. It's been a long time, boys. But the game is indeed headed to Dreamcast and we should start seeing the first glimpses of it soon...Speaking of older Sega games, seems that **all hope is lost for a new Streets of Rage game.** Good ol' boy and kick-ass musician/game designer **Yuzo Koshiro** told a source close to the Q that while he was keen on doing a sequel, Sega wasn't so enthralled with the idea. Darnit!

...Now that Gamecube has been announced and those little demos shown, you've gotta wonder, which ones are actually going to turn into real games, especially the one we've all been waiting for—**Metroid (*drool*...someone get me a bib!).** Seems that Samus' next adventure will come out of the Lone Star State, from a lil' company we like to call **Retro.** Let's just hope those boys know how to do Metroid justice...**Medal of Honor PS2?** Awwwwww yeah...

...The **Xbox** release is getting closer and there still haven't been any announcements about **Japanese developers.** The Q-meister's beginning to think that maybe it's been a tough road getting developers across the Pacific as excited about the system's power as everyone in the U.S./Europe seems to be...speaking of being excited, **Eidos** is so enthusiastic that Xbox is the way of all things gaming that they're **already plotting a new Lara Croft adventure for the Xbox launch.** But wait, I thought Lara was dead...Speaking of the boys

at Eidos, seems they just may've been victorious in snatching future **Tokyo Extreme Racer** games away from Crave Entertainment after TXR2. And the series' next move is to PS2...

...**Spyro the Dragon is being freed from his PlayStation shackles in 2002.** Due to a deal struck between Universal and Havas Interactive, the lil' dragon pal will land on Xbox, Ps2 and Game Boy Advance—among other platforms yet to be named (can you say, Gamecube?). Well sorry to rain on your parade, boys, but **if the fine folks at Insomniac aren't designing Spyro 4,** will it really be any good? Ready the award for "the most pimping of a video game franchise..."

...**Infogrames** has absorbed another company! **Mattel** is the latest to be bought, but it hasn't been formally announced yet...

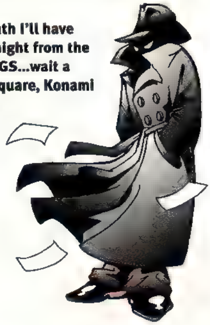
...**Electronic Arts is working on an Ultima Online-derivative title for PS2.** Since the game'll be ready before the broadband strategy for PS2 is in place, it'll **come with a 56k USB modem in the box**...Hmm, the PS2 is becoming quite the home for online RPGs. **Everquest,** the other major online RPG, is **definitely PS2-bound**...

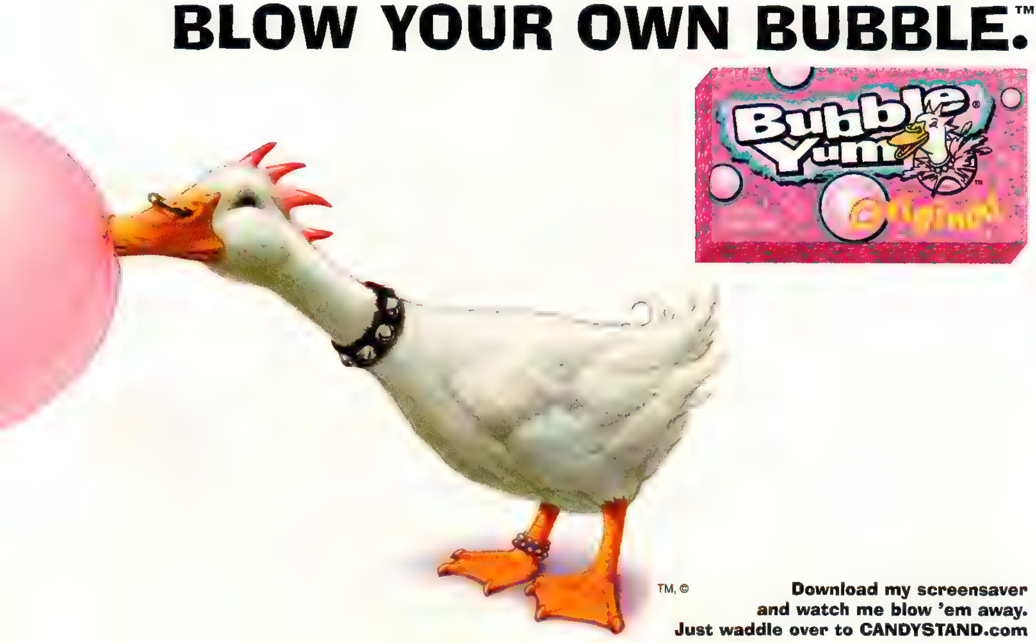
...**LucasArts' next Star Wars: Shadows of the Empire** game which was shown as a Gamecube demo will also be coming to PS2 and Xbox. Ah, it's good to hear that finally game consoles have reached a point where they can more accurately depict the Star Wars universe we've become so accustomed to all these years...Wonder what kinds of games will accompany the release of **Episode II**...

...Man oh man. This lil' tidbit is one the Q saved for last this month (Still reading? Good.). **Polyphony Digital** is still hard at work on GT2000, but lead designer Kazunori Yamauchi is already looking towards the future. **In GT3 (the official "sequel" to GT2)** instead of buying cars off the CD when you've earned credits—you'll be buying them off of the official GT3 Web site. Yamauchi's plan for the series eventually is to **get every car ever made into the game** (yeouch, big plans!), and that can only be done by offering the cars online...

Next month I'll have more straight from the floor of TGS...wait a sec, no Square, Konami or Sega?

- The Q

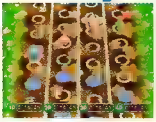




The Top 20 Best-Selling Games of July, 2000

1 - Kirby 64

LAST MONTH: NEW

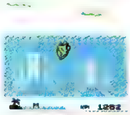


Nintendo's little pink blob hits the charts and shoots straight to the top this month, proving that N64 owners know a good game when they see one. It's exciting to see a Nintendo game in the top five that *isn't* starring Pokémon!

Score	Reviewer
9.0	Chris
7.5	Mark
8.5	Shawn

2 - Pokémon Yellow

LAST MONTH: 3

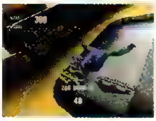


Pikachu and company may have lost the top spot, but you can bet that they aren't far away. **Nintendo**'s franchise holds strong at number two, with the release of Gold & Silver (and Crystal in 2001) just on the horizon.

Score	Reviewer
8.0	Chris
6.0	Crispin
8.0	Che
6.0	Shoe

3 - Tony Hawk's Pro Skater

LAST MONTH: 4



Activision's top skater might get pushed off the chart by its own sequel. Then again, if they drop the price, this one could be around for a while. Either way, expect to see Tony here again soon with a "2" in the title.

Score	Reviewer
9.0	Che
9.0	Crispin
8.0	Dean
7.5	Chris

4 - World Series 2K1

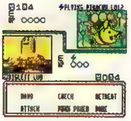
LAST MONTH: NEW

Seems lots of people ignored our esteemed sports guys on **Sega**'s new baseball game, then again we don't get numbers on how many were eventually returned. Nice to see a Dreamcast title crack the top five—too bad it's such a turd.

Score	Reviewer
3.0	Dan
5.0	Dean
2.5	Kraig

5 - Pokémon Trading Card

LAST MONTH: 2



Trading cards on the Game Boy! **Nintendo** could sell loads of just about anything with the Pokémon name on it, but this Game Boy Color rendition of the popular card game is actually quite good...if you're into that sort of stuff. Freak.

Score	Reviewer
8.5	Cyril
4.5	Chris
9.0	Jim

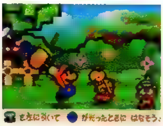
Rank	Game	Publisher	Last Month
6	Legend of Dragoon	Sony CEA	12
7	Spec Ops	Take 2 Interactive	7
8	Perfect Dark	Nintendo	1
9	Driver	GT Interactive	---
10	Pokémon Blue	Nintendo	8
11	Pokémon Red	Nintendo	10
12	Star Wars Episode I: Racer	LucasArts	---
13	WWF SmackDown!	THQ	9
14	Super Mario Bros. Deluxe	Nintendo	14
15	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater	Activision	5
16	Wario Land 3	Nintendo	6
17	Tekken 3	Namco	---
18	Syphon Filter 2	989 Studios	13
19	Pokémon Stadium	Nintendo	11
20	Syphon Filter	989 Studios	16

Source: NPD TRSTS Video Games Service. Call Mary Ann Porreca at (516) 625-2345 for questions regarding this list. Top 5 game descriptions written by the *EGM* staff.

JAPAN TOP 10

Rank	Game	Publisher
1	Mario Story	Nintendo
2	Mario Tennis 64	Nintendo
3	Shin Sangoku Musou	Koei
4	SD Gundam Generation-F	Bandai
5	Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters III	Konami
6	Final Fantasy IX	Square
7	Jikkyo Powerful Pro Baseball 2000	Konami
8	Armored Core 2	From Software
9	My Summer Vacation	Sony CEI
10	Medarot 3 Kabuto/Kawagada Version	Bandai

Weekly Famitsu, week ending 8/15/2000



Don't call it a comeback! Mario takes the top two spots in Japan with Mario Story (Paper Mario here) and Mario Tennis.

FFIX may not be on top, but it's still selling strong. Impressive since we figured everybody who wanted it already bought it in its 2 million+ opening week of sales.

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PlayStation 2 | Performance

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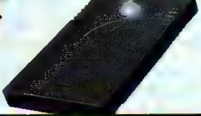
PlayStation 2 | InterAct



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PlayStation 2 | InterAct

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PlayStation 2 | InterAct

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PlayStation 2 | Performance

Performance

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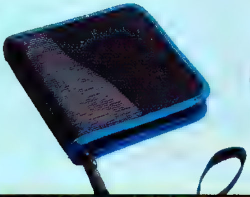
PlayStation 2 | InterAct



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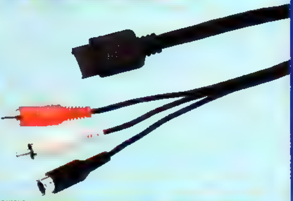

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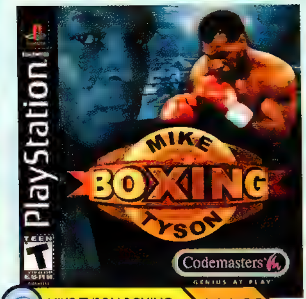
PlayStation 2 | Performance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SCION OF SORCERY

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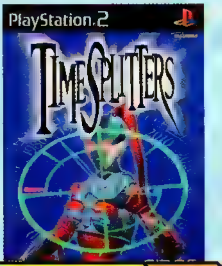
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Compiled By Chris Johnston chris_johnston@zd.co
& Jennifer Whiteside

Coming Soon - November 2000

October

Game Boy Color

Animorphs - Ubi Soft	RPG
Brunswick Pro Pool - Vatical Entertainment	Sports
Bust A Move Millennium - Acclaim	Puzzle
Cruis'n Exotica - Midway	Racing
Cybertiger - EA Sports	Sports
F1 Championship 99 - Ubi Soft	Racing
Formula 1 Racing - Take 2 Interactive	Racing
Galaxian - Majesco	Shooter
Grand Theft Auto 2 - Take 2 Interactive	Racing
Hercules - Titus	Action
Jimmy White's Cue Ball - Vatical Entertainment	Sports
Lemmings Revolution - Take 2 Interactive	Puzzle
Magical Drop - Electro Source	Puzzle
Micro Machines V3 - THQ	Racing
MTV Sports: Ultimate BMX - THQ	Sports
NASCAR Racers - Majesco	Racing
NBA Jam 2001 - Acclaim	Sports
Pokémon Gold - Nintendo	RPG
Pokémon Silver - Nintendo	RPG
Puzzle Collection - Electro Source	Puzzle
Rugrats in Paris - THQ	Action
VR Sports: Powerboat Racing - Vatical Entertainment	Racing
World Destruction League - 3DO	Action
Xena - Titus	Action

PlayStation

Army Men Sarge's Heroes 2 - 3Do	Action
Backyard Football - Infogrames	Sports
Breath of Fire IV - Capcom	RPG
Buzz Lightyear of Star Command - Activision	Action
Dark Stone - Take 2 Interactive	RPG
Dragon Valor - Namco	RPG
Earthworm Jim - Interplay	Action
ESPN Outdoor Games: Bass Fishing - Konami	Sports
FIFA 2001 - EA Sports	Sports
Ford Racing - Take 2 Interactive	Racing
Formula 1 2000 - Tommo	Racing
Galaga - Hasbro	Shooter
Harvest Moon Back to Nature - Natsume	RPG
Jarrett & Labonte Stock Car Racing - Codemasters	Racing
Jungle Book - Ubi Soft	Misc.
Martian Gothic - Take 2 Interactive	Action
Medal of Honor Underground - Electronic Arts	Action
Mega Man Legends 2 - Capcom	Action
Mike Tyson Boxing - Codemasters	Sports
Mort the Chicken - Electronic Arts	Action
Moto Racer World Tour - Infogrames	Racing
Muppet RaceMania - Midway	Racing
MTV Sports: TJ Lavin's Ultimate BMX - THQ	Sports
NASCAR Heat - Hasbro	Racing
NBA Live 2001 - EA Sports	Sports
NBA ShootOut 2001 - 989 Sports	Sports
Pro Pinball: Fantastic Journey - Take 2 Interactive	Misc.
Rollcage Stage 2 - Midway	Racing
RPG Maker - Agetec	RPG
Rugrats in Paris - THQ	Action
Sheep - Empire Interactive	Puzzle
Speedball 2100 - Take 2 Interactive	Sports
Superman - Titus	Action
Ultimate Fighting Championship - Crave Ent.	Fighting
Vampire Hunter D - Jaleco	Action
Vanishing Point - Acclaim	Racing
WCW 2001 - Electronic Arts	Sports
Worms Pinball - Infogrames	Misc.
WWF SmackDown! 2 - THQ	Sports
You Don't Know Jack Vol. 2- Sierra	Misc.

Nintendo 64

40 Winks - Infogrames	Action
Big Mountain - Southpeak	Racing
Caesar's Palace - Crave Entertainment	Misc.
Cruis'n Exotica - Midway	Racing
F1 Championship 99 - Ubi Soft	Racing
International Track & Field - Konami	Sports
Legend of Zelda 2: Majora's Mask - Nintendo	RPG
Ogre Battle 64: Person of Lordly Caliber - Atlus	RPG
Rugrats in Paris - THQ	Action
Scooby-Doo! Classic Creep Capers - THQ	Action

Dreamcast

4X4 Evolution - Gathering of Developers	Racing
Austin Powers: Mojo Rally - Take 2 Interactive	Racing
Buzz Lightyear of Star Command - Activision	Action
Dark Angel: Vampire Apocalypse - Metro 3D	Adventure
Dogs of War - Take 2 Interactive	Strategy
ESPN NBA 2 Night - Konami	Sports
Evil Dead: Hail to the King - THQ	Action
F1 Championship 99 - Ubi Soft	Racing
Frogger 2 - Majesco	Action
Grand Prix 4 - Hasbro	Racing
Half-Life - Sierra	Action
Heroes of Might & Magic 3 - Ubi Soft	Strategy
Jet Grind Radio - Sega	Action
KISS: Psycho Circus - Gathering of Developers	Action
NBA 2K1 - Sega	Sports
Peace Makers - Ubi Soft	Action
POD 2 - Ubi Soft	Racing
Pro Pinball Collection - Take 2 Interactive	Misc.
Q*Bert - Majesco	Action
Quake III Arena - Sega	Action
Rainbow Six: Rogue Spear - Majesco	Action
Samba de Amigo - Sega	Misc.
Sega Marine Fishing - Sega	Sports
Silent Scope - Konami	Action
Spawn - Capcom	Action
StarLancer - Crave Entertainment	Action
Star Trek: New Worlds - Interplay	Strategy
Star Wars Episode I: Jedi Power Battles - LucasArts	Action
Vanishing Point - Acclaim	Racing
Worms Pinball - Infogrames	Misc.

November

Game Boy Color

Action Man - THQ	Action
Airforce Delta - Konami	Flight Sim
Aladdin - Ubi Soft	Adventure
Army Men Air Combat - 3Do	Action
Army Men: Sarge's Heroes 2 - 3Do	Action
Batman Racing - Ubi Soft	Racing
Blade - Activision	Action
Buzz Lightyear of Star Command - Activision	Action
Cannon Fodder - Codemasters	Action
Carnivale - Vatical	Action
Chicken Run - THQ	Action
Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX - Acclaim	Sports
Donald Duck: Quack Attack - Ubi Soft	Action
Donkey Kong Country - Nintendo	Action
Dukes of Hazzard - Southpeak	Racing
FIFA 2001 - Electronic Arts	Sports
Force 221 - South Peak	Action
Gauntlet Legends - Midway	Action
Godzilla 2 - Crave Entertainment	Action
Grinch, The - Konami	Action
Harvest Moon 2 - Natsume	RPG
Inspector Gadget - Ubi Soft	Action
Jungle Book - Ubi Soft	Action
Lego Action Team - Lego Media	Action
Lego Stunt Rally/Racers - Lego Media	Racing
Little Nicky - Ubi Soft	Adventure
Madden NFL 2001 - EA Sports	Sports
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX - Activision	Sports
Mummy, The - Konami	Action
NBA Live 2000 - THQ	Sports
Road Rash - Electronic Arts	Racing
Robopon - Atlus	RPG
Roswell Conspiracies - South Peak	Adventure
Scooby Doo! Classic Creep Capers - THQ	Adventure
Surfing - Ubi Soft	Sports
Tech Deck Skateboarding - Codemasters	Sports
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 - Activision	Sports
VIP - Ubi Soft	Action
Warriors of Might & Magic - 3Do	Action
Woody Woodpecker Racing - Konami	Racing
X-Men: Mutant Wars - Activision	Action

PlayStation

007 Racing - Electronic Arts	Racing
102 Dalmations: Pup to the Rescue - Eidos	Action
Alone in the Dark: The New Nightmare - Infogrames	Action
Army Men Arcade Blasts - 3DO	Action
Batman Racing - Ubi Soft	Racing
Blade - Activision	Action
Bugs & Taz Time Busters - Infogrames	Action
Carmageddon 2 - Interplay	Racing
Championship Motocross 2001 - THQ	Racing
Championship Surfer - Mattel	Sports
Chicken Run - Eidos	Action
Cool Boarders 2001 - Sony CEA	Sports
Crash Bash - Sony CEA	Misc.
Disney: Emperor's New Groove - Sony CEA	Action
Donald Duck: Goin' Quackers - Ubi Soft	Action
Dukes of Hazzard II - Southpeak	Racing
Evil Dead: Hail to the King - THQ	Action
Final Fantasy IX - Square EA	RPG
Grinch, The - Konami	Action
HBO Boxing - Acclaim	Sports
Hidden and Dangerous - Take 2 Interactive	Action
Inspector Gadget - Ubi Soft	Action
Knockout Kings 2001 - EA Sports	Sports
Looney Tunes Racing - Infogrames	Racing
Lunar 2: Eternal Blue - Working Designs	RPG
March Madness 2001 - EA Sports	Sports
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX - Activision	Sports
McGrath/Pastrana Motocross - Acclaim	Sports
Mummy, The - Konami	Action
Muppet Monster Adventure - Midway	Adventure
NASCAR Racers - Hasbro	Racing
NCAA Final Four 2001 - 989 Sports	Sports
Persona 2 - Atlus	RPG
Power Spike Pro Beach Volleyball - Infogrames	Sports
Ready 2 Rumble Round 2 - Midway	Sports
Rock Em Sock Em Robots - Mattel	Action
Rainbow Six: Rogue Spear - Red Storm	Action
Scooby Doo! Classic Creep Capers - THQ	Adventure
Spyro: Year of the Dragon - Sony CEA	Adventure
Star Wars Demolition - LucasArts	Action
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2001 - EA Sports	Sports
Tomb Raider Chronicles - Eidos	Adventure
Torneko: The Last Hope - Enix	RPG
VIP - Ubi Soft	Action
Warriors of Might & Magic - 3DO	RPG
Woody Woodpecker Racing - Konami	Racing
World Is Not Enough, The - Electronic Arts	Actio
X-Men: Mutant Wars - Activision	Actio

Nintendo 64

Banjo-Tooie - Nintendo	Adventur
Blues Brothers 2000 - Titus	Actio
Carnivale - Vatical Entertainment	Actio
Eternal Darkness - Nintendo	RP
Greatest Arcade Hits I - Midway	Misc
Hercules - Titus	Actio
Hey You! Pikachu - Nintendo	Misc
Mia Hamm 64 Soccer - Southpeak	Sport
Mickey's Speedway USA - Nintendo	Racin
Ready 2 Rumble Round 2 - Midway	Sport
Spider-Man - Activision	Actio
World Is Not Enough, The - Electronic Arts	Actio
WCW Backstage Assault - Electronic Arts	Sport
WWF No Mercy - THQ	Sport

Dreamcast

102 Dalmations: Pup to the Rescue - Eidos	Actio
Alone in the Dark: The New Nightmare - Infogrames	Actio
Arcatera - Ubi Soft	Adventur
Army Men: Sarge's Heroes - Midway	Actio
Ball Breakers - Take 2 Interactive	Sport
Capcom vs. SNK - Capcom	Fightin
Dave Mirra Freestyle BMX - Acclaim	Sport
Disney's Dinosaur - Ubi Soft	Adventur
Dragon Rider - Ubi Soft	Adventur
ECW Anarchy Rulz - Acclaim	Sport
ESPN Baseball Tonight - Konami	Sport
ESPN Links Golf - Konami	Sport
Evil Twin: Cyprien's Chronicle - Ubi Soft	Actio
Gold & Glory: Road to El Dorado, The - Ubi Soft	Adventur
Greatest Arcade Hits III - Midway	Misc
Grinch, The - Konami	Actio
Legend of the Blade Masters - Ripcord	RP
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX - Activision	Sport
Metropolis Street Racer - Sega	Racin
Monster Breeder - Tommo	RP
Ms. Pac-Man Maze Madness - Namco	Puzzl
Polaris SnoCross - Vatical Entertainment	Racin
Quest of the Blademasters - Ripcord	Adventur
Ready 2 Rumble Round 2 - Midway	Sport
Shenmue - Sega	Adventur
Skies of Arcadia - Sega	RP
Sno-Cross Champ. Racing - Crave Entertainment	Racin
Soldier of Fortune - Crave Entertainment	Actio
Sonic Shuffle - Sega	Misc
Speed Devils 2 - Ubi Soft	Racin
Star Wars Demolition - LucasArts	Actio
Stunt GP - Infogrames	Racin
System Shock 2 - Vatical Entertainment	Adventur
Test Drive Le Mans - Infogrames	Racin
Tomb Raider Chronicles - Eidos	Adventur
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 - Activision	Sport
Unreal Tournament - Infogrames	Fightin
VIP - Ubi Soft	Actio
Who Wants to Beat Up a Millionaire - Sierra	Misc

December

Game Boy Color

Aliens Thanatos Encounter - Capcom	Actio
Croc 2 - THQ	Adventur
Lion King: Simba's Adventure - Activision	Adventur
MTV Sports: Pure Ride - THQ	Sport
The Simpsons - THQ	Actio
WWF No Mercy - THQ	Sport

PlayStation

Blade Arts - Enix	Adventur
EA Sports Supercross 2001 - EA Sports	Racin
Gold & Glory: Road to El Dorado - Ubi Soft	Adventur

Nintendo 64

Aidyn Chronicles: The First Mage - THQ	RP
Donald Duck - Ubi Soft	Actio
Ms. Pac-Man Maze Madness - Namco	Puzzl
Paper Mario - Nintendo	RP

Dreamcast

Age of Empires II - Konami	Strateg
Grandia II - Ubi Soft	RP
Max Steel - Mattel	Actio
Mummy, The - Konami	Actio
Stupid Invaders - Ubi Soft	Actio
SWAT 3D - Sierra	Strateg

January

Game Boy Color

Mega Man Extreme - Capcom	Actio
Metal Walker - Capcom	Actio
Pocket Racers - Interplay	Racin

PlayStation

Deuce - Midway	Adventur

Nintendo 64

Conker's Bad Fur Day - Nintendo	Adventur
Mega Man 64 - Capcom	Actio

Dreamcast

Armada II - Metro 3D	Actio
Cannon Spike - Capcom	Shoote

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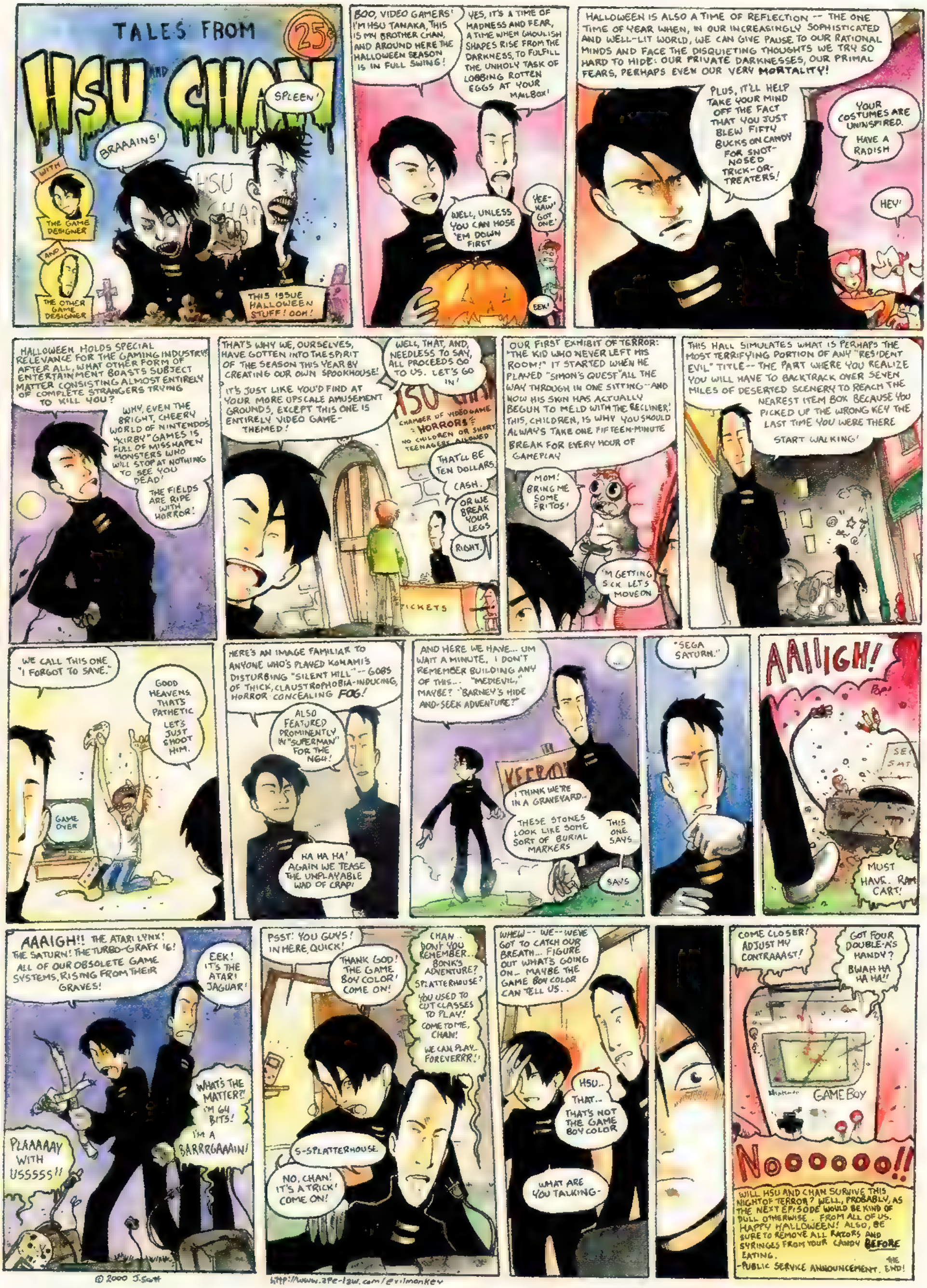
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THIS ISSUE HALLOWEEN STUFF! OOH!
BOO, VIDEO GAMERS! I'M HSU TANAKA, THIS IS MY BROTHER CHAN, AND AROUND HERE THE HALLOWEEN SEASON IS IN FULL SWING!
YES, IT'S A TIME OF MADNESS AND FEAR, A TIME WHEN GHOULISH SHAPES RISE FROM THE DARKNESS, TO FULFILL THE UNHOLY TASK OF LOBBING ROTTEN EGGS AT YOUR MAILBOX!
WELL, UNLESS YOU CAN HOSE 'EM DOWN FIRST
YEE-HAW! GOT ONE!
EEK!
HALLOWEEN IS ALSO A TIME OF REFLECTION -- THE ONE TIME OF YEAR WHEN, IN OUR INCREASINGLY SOPHISTICATED AND WELL-LIT WORLD, WE CAN GIVE PAUSE TO OUR RATIONAL MINDS AND FACE THE DISQUIETING THOUGHTS WE TRY SO HARD TO HIDE: OUR PRIVATE DARKNESSES, OUR PRIMAL FEARS, PERHAPS EVEN OUR VERY MORTALITY!
PLUS, IT'LL HELP TAKE YOUR MIND OFF THE FACT THAT YOU JUST BLEW FIFTY BUCKS ON CANDY FOR SNOT-NOSED TRICK-OR-TREATERS!
YOUR COSTUMES ARE UNINSPIRED. HAVE A RADISH
HEY!
HALLOWEEN HOLDS SPECIAL RELEVANCE FOR THE GAMING INDUSTRY! AFTER ALL, WHAT OTHER FORM OF ENTERTAINMENT BOASTS SUBJECT MATTER CONSISTING ALMOST ENTIRELY OF COMPLETE STRANGERS TRYING TO KILL YOU?
WHY, EVEN THE BRIGHT, CHEERY WORLD OF NINTENDO'S "KIRBY" GAMES IS FULL OF MISSHAPEN MONSTERS WHO WILL STOP AT NOTHING TO SEE YOU DEAD!
THE FIELDS ARE RIPE WITH HORROR!
THAT'S WHY WE, OURSELVES, HAVE GOTTEN INTO THE SPIRIT OF THE SEASON THIS YEAR BY CREATING OUR OWN SPOOKHOUSE!
IT'S JUST LIKE YOU'D FIND AT YOUR MORE UPSCALE AMUSEMENT GROUNDS, EXCEPT THIS ONE IS ENTIRELY VIDEO GAME-THEMED!
WELL, THAT, AND, NEEDLESS TO SAY, ALL PROCEEDS GO TO US. LET'S GO IN!
HSU CHAN CHAMBER OF VIDEO GAME HORRORS! NO CHILDREN OR SHORT TEENAGERS ALLOWED
THAT'LL BE TEN DOLLARS.
CASH.
OR WE BREAK YOUR LEGS
RIGHT.
TICKETS
OUR FIRST EXHIBIT OF TERROR: "THE KID WHO NEVER LEFT HIS ROOM!" IT STARTED WHEN HE PLAYED "SIMON'S QUEST" ALL THE WAY THROUGH IN ONE SITTING -- AND NOW HIS SKIN HAS ACTUALLY BEGUN TO MELD WITH THE RECLINER! THIS, CHILDREN, IS WHY YOU SHOULD ALWAYS TAKE ONE FIFTEEN-MINUTE BREAK FOR EVERY HOUR OF GAMEPLAY
MOM! BRING ME SOME FRITOS!
I'M GETTING SICK. LET'S MOVE ON
THIS HALL SIMULATES WHAT IS PERHAPS THE MOST TERRIFYING PORTION OF ANY "RESIDENT EVIL" TITLE -- THE PART WHERE YOU REALIZE YOU WILL HAVE TO BACKTRACK OVER SEVEN MILES OF DESERTED SCENERY TO REACH THE NEAREST ITEM BOX BECAUSE YOU PICKED UP THE WRONG KEY THE LAST TIME YOU WERE THERE
START WALKING!
WE CALL THIS ONE "I FORGOT TO SAVE."
GOOD HEAVENS. THAT'S PATHETIC
LET'S JUST SHOOT HIM.
GAME OVER
HERE'S AN IMAGE FAMILIAR TO ANYONE WHO'S PLAYED KONAMI'S "SILENT HILL" -- GOBS OF THICK, CLAUSTROPHOBIA-INDUCING HORROR CONCEALING FOG!
ALSO FEATURED PROMINENTLY IN "SUPERMAN" FOR THE N64!
HA HA HA! AGAIN WE TEASE THE UNPLAYABLE WAD OF CRAP!
AND HERE WE HAVE... UM WAIT A MINUTE. I DON'T REMEMBER BUILDING ANY OF THIS... "MEDIEVIL," MAYBE? "BARNEY'S HIDE AND-SEEK ADVENTURE?"
I THINK WE'RE IN A GRAVEYARD..
THESE STONES LOOK LIKE SOME SORT OF BURIAL MARKERS
THIS ONE SAYS
SAYS
"SEGA SATURN."
AAIIIGH!
POP!
SEGA SATURN
MUST HAVE. RAM CART!
AAAIGH!! THE ATARI LYNX! THE SATURN! THE TURBO-GRAFX 16! ALL OF OUR OBSOLETE GAME SYSTEMS, RISING FROM THEIR GRAVES!
EEK! IT'S THE ATARI JAGUAR!
WHAT'S THE MATTER?! I'M 64 BITS! I'M A BARRRGAAAIN!
PLAAAAAY WITH USSSSS!!
WHIRR WHIRR
PSST! YOU GUYS! IN HERE, QUICK!
THANK GOD! THE GAME BOY COLOR! COME ON!
CHAN.. DON'T YOU REMEMBER... BONK'S ADVENTURE? SPLATTERHOUSE? YOU USED TO CUT CLASSES TO PLAY! COME TO ME, CHAN! WE CAN PLAY... FOREVERRR!
S-SPLATTERHOUSE
NO, CHAN! IT'S A TRICK! COME ON!
WHEW -- WE -- WE'VE GOT TO CATCH OUR BREATH... FIGURE OUT WHAT'S GOING ON... MAYBE THE GAME BOY COLOR CAN TELL US..
HSU.. THAT.. THAT'S NOT THE GAME BOY COLOR
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING-
COME CLOSER! ADJUST MY CONTRAAAST!
GOT FOUR DOUBLE-A'S HANDY? BWAH HA HA HA!!
Nintendo GAME BOY
NOOOOOOO!!
WILL HSU AND CHAN SURVIVE THIS NIGHT OF TERROR? WELL, PROBABLY, AS THE NEXT EPISODE WOULD BE KIND OF DULL OTHERWISE. FROM ALL OF US, HAPPY HALLOWEEN! ALSO, BE SURE TO REMOVE ALL RAZORS AND SYRINGES FROM YOUR CANDY BEFORE EATING.
-PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT. THE END!

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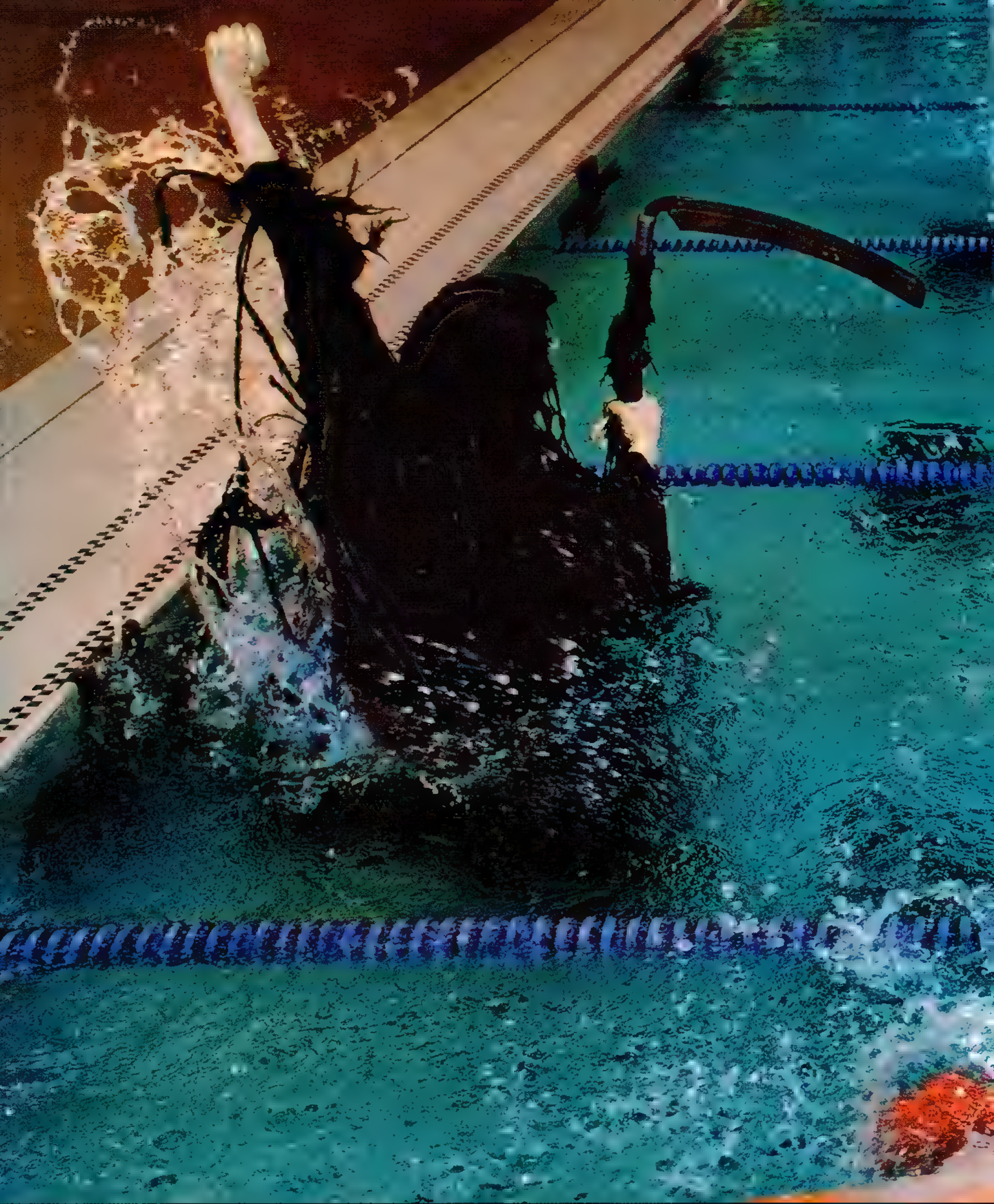

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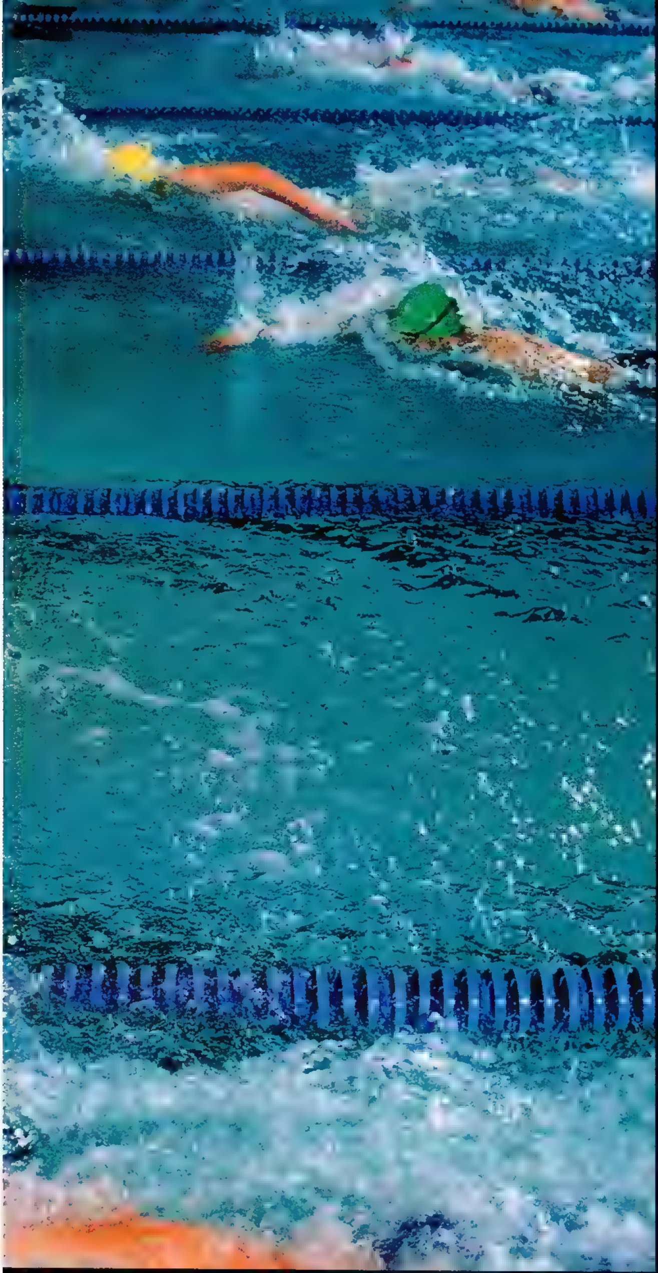

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INCLUDES EXCLUSIVE NEW MISSION!
RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

- New weapons, characters and effects designed to take advantage of Dreamcast's power.
- Intelligent characters and an intense story create a unique action game experience.

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-LIFE®

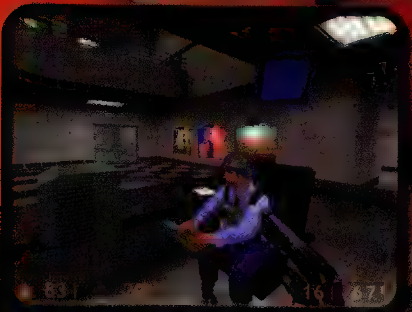
HALF-LIFE
Dreamcast
SIERRA
VALVE
RP

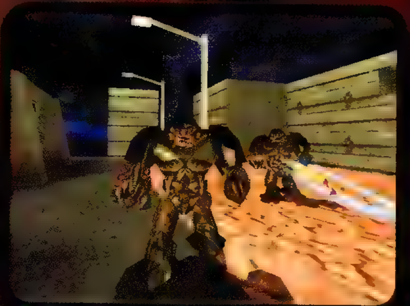
"THE BEST FIRST-PERSON SHOOTER OF ALL TIME..."

-Official Sega Dreamcast Magazine

Just another day at the office. Or so you thought...until your experiment blew up in your face. Now, with aliens coming through the walls and a military death squad killing everything in site, you're scrambling to stay alive. Half-Life combines great storytelling with intense action and advanced technology to create what many consider to be the greatest action game experience of all time.

Plus, here for the first time is an entirely new Half-Life mission created exclusively for the Dreamcast - Blue Shift! In this huge new campaign, you take command of a security guard at the Black Mesa research facility and battle your way through the chaos of an alien invasion.





- Huge new mission, Half-Life: Blue Shift - designed just for the Dreamcast!
- Play the game that has won more than 50 Game of the Year awards from publications around the world.

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This Month in Previews

With all the excitement around the PS2 launch and the unveiling of the Gamecube, it might be easy to miss something here, now, right under our noses—the Dreamcast. The third(?) generation of DC software is upon us, and plenty more killer games on the way in the next few months: Jet Grind Radio, Quake III, NFL 2K1, Phantasy Star Online, the list goes on. This issue we have what looks to be the first truly great DC RPG in Grandia II. And out of left field came Test Drive Le Mans, which quite frankly blew everyone at the office away. We weren't expecting more than a port of the PS game—needless to say we have a whole new respect for Infogrames. The graphics in Xtreme Sports really suprised us as well; It seems the European third parties in particular are dedicated to the Sega system, something we'd like to see more of here in our own country.

As everyone—gamers and developers alike—waits for the PS2, and now Gamecube and X-Box, Sega seems caught in the awkward transition period. They sold a lot of units by being the first out of the gate (2 million installed users is nothing to sneeze at), but now comes the true test—once the mass market sees the PS2, will they decide the DC is still worth it? Or do Gamecube and Xbox look good enough to wait for?

With all these great games, the price drop and SegaNet finally going live this month, Sega seems to be doing all they can. The question is, will it be enough?

This holiday season will be the answer. We've got a soft spot for Sega, the scrappy underdog, but may the best system (and games) win.

WARNING: Previews marked with international symbols may or may not be released in the U.S. They are designed to run on Japanese or European PAL systems. Import at your own risk.

Sega and their third-party developers know the holiday season is key. Titles like Grandia II (page 70) will lead the charge in what could be the DC's last stand.

TOP 5 Preview Picks

1.	**Sin and Punishment**	Nintendo 64, October ●
2.	**Grandia II**	Dreamcast, December
3.	**Wipeout Fusion**	PlayStation 2, Q2 2001
4.	**Alone in the Dark**	Game Boy Color, Q1 2001
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When Doves Cry

The loss of SNK's Neo•Geo Pocket Color in the U.S. market has hit some of the *EGM* staff pretty hard. Especially Mark MacDonald, who's refused to come out of his room since issue #134. Every time one of us tries to coax him out using old Scorpions albums or promises of a nifty new Ziff Davis T-shirt, he simply cries out, "Bullstuff!" Then the relentless sobbing resumes. But we've got a new plan. We've devoted a section of Previews to the NGPC, and we hereby dedicate it to Mark (the big baby). All the stuff you see on page 172 is out now and should be available through most import shops (or at astronomically high prices on ebay). Hopefully this plan works. Mark's apartment is starting to stink something fierce since his cat has had the run of the place for a couple months now. We'll be sure to keep you all posted.

TWO WORDS

Shenmue

11.11.00

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB
Animated Violence
Mild Language
Use of Tobacco and Alcohol

www.sega.com/shenmue

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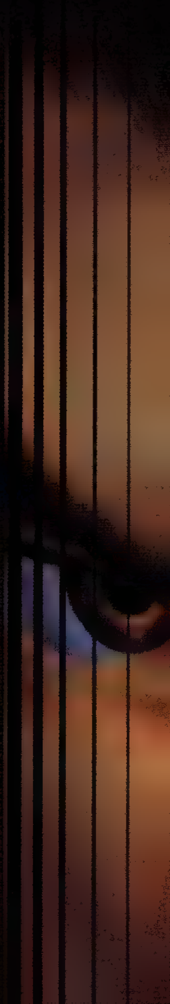
Dreamcast™



PREVIEW

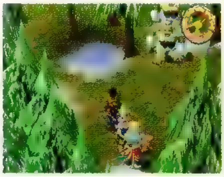
Grandia II

[illegible] Ubi Soft
Developer: Game Arts
[illegible] 1
Genre: RPG
% Done: 100% (Japan)
[illegible] Now (Japan)/Dec. (U.S.)
[illegible] Grandia (PlayStation)
[illegible] www.ubisoft.com
www.gamearts.co.jp

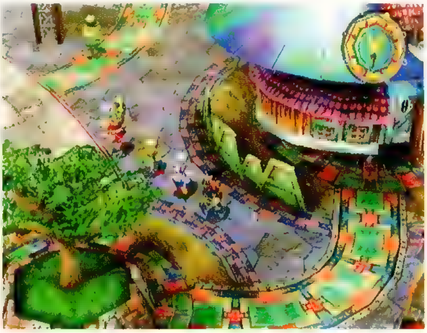
The Good: The deep story line and incredible graphics.

The [illegible] With the DC's current performance in Japan, how many more games like this will we get?

[illegible] Mareg's eating habits.



The dungeons are designed like the ones in the original—beasts walk around and the battles begin when you touch them...



You can swing the camera around freely, a feature that comes in most handy when you're exploring the incredible-looking towns.

RPG fans have had a rough year with the Dreamcast. Sure, Evolution and its sequel were fun, and EGG could be considered enjoyable as long as you didn't mind the visuals, but both Silver and Time Stalkers left something to be desired. Of course, despite all these games having role-playing elements, none of them could be considered "traditional RPGs"; a genre the Dreamcast has been seriously lacking in—until now. Skies of Arcadia, Sega's big RPG being handled by the creators of Phantasy Star is approaching fast, but even more exciting is a certain sequel to one of the greatest 32-Bit RPGs ever...Grandia II.

In spite of what the name might imply, Grandia II isn't a true follow-up to the previous game. You won't see Justin or Sue, and the world they inhabited has been totally forgotten. Instead, Grandia II introduces us to a whole new slew of characters and locations while retaining a look and feel similar to the first game, much like every Final Fantasy sequel. But art style and gameplay systems aren't all that link these two titles together. "The final message of the Grandia series is that humanity is good—that's the common theme between the two games," explains Mr. Takeshi Miyaji, producer for Grandia II. Another similarity between the two titles is the feeling of a world divided—the first Grandia had a great wall that separated the main continent, and Grandia II has a great gorge in the earth that has the same effect. And there's little doubt the two games share an equally deep focus on delivering a grand tale.

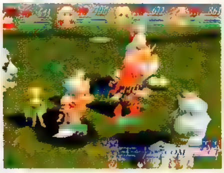
Game Arts' RPGs have always been applauded for their strong story lines and rich character development, a tradition that began with the original Lunar and has continued through both its sequel and the first Grandia, but this latest title brings these elements to a whole new level. Thankfully, though, while Ubi Soft is putting an incredible amount of work into the localization, they promise to keep the game as faithful to the original Japanese release as possible—meanwhile sidestepping the problems that hindered the original Grandia's impact when Sony released it here.

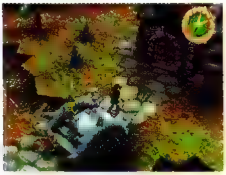
If you played Grandia, you know what we're talking about. The few problems that everyone had with the original game were with its poorly translated script and horrible voice acting, both of which Ubi Soft are working to insure won't be an issue with the sequel. A team of talented writers are spending months to smooth over the text, but even more impressive is the work going into the speaking roles. "We have already arranged the voiceover audio direction, courtesy of voice director Kris Zimmerman, who worked on Metal Gear Solid," confirmed John Chowanec, Ubi Soft's marketing manager for

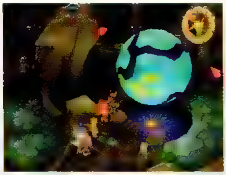
THE FUTURE

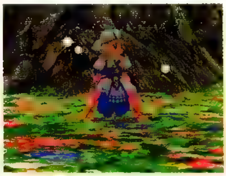
PS2 Bound?

As you're probably already well aware, the first Grandia came out for the Saturn originally in Japan, and then was quickly ported over to the PlayStation— which was the only form of the game we received over here. Even though the first time we'll see Grandia II in America will be on a Sega system, don't be surprised if it shows up a year or so later on a certain new Sony machine. When asked if Grandia II would be ported over to other systems, producer Miyaji turned to Saito-San, the game's director and gave the comic answer of, "Actually we both have differing opinions on this. We're going to go back to Tokyo to decide by rock, paper, scissors." Sounds like an important game, but we've got a feeling that whoever wins, we'll still see a PlayStation 2 version of Grandia II in the future...









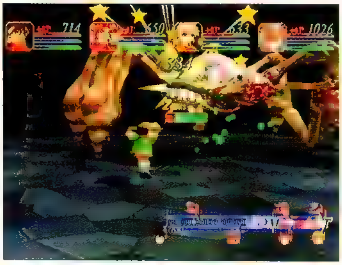
Grandia II. "We're very confident that this title is in the best hands it could be." There's been no word on exactly who will be offering their voice talents to the game, but we've been told there will be a few recognizable names in the bunch—perhaps some of the same voice actors from MGS.

A more serious cast of voice talent would fit perfectly with Grandia II's new story line focus. Unlike the first game, which was based on lighthearted adventure, the sequel is taking things to a slightly darker level. "There is some evilness in Grandia II that only adults can understand—inhumane cruelty, or emotional cruelty, which might not be as evident to children." Explained the game's director, Katsunori Saito. This isn't to say Grandia II won't have its simplistic fun moments, and the overall mood of the game is pretty light, but expect much more somber undertones to be littered throughout.

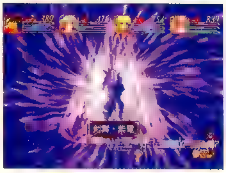
You play the role of Ryudo, a young man who's considered one of the best monster hunters in the land. There's a great evil slowly enveloping this once peaceful world, hinting that the great war between the ultimate forces of light and darkness that nearly tore the planet apart years ago (hence the giant gorge in the earth) might have only been a foreshadow of the true battle to come—a battle that could begin at any moment. It seems the god of darkness, Valmar, is returning, and Granas, his counterpart on the side of light is nowhere to be found. As Ryudo you'll search across the globe, gathering friends and discovering dark secrets, eventually coming to terms with what's happening around you and what you must do to combat the oncoming menace.

The strong story line won't be your only incentive to keep playing, though. Grandia II has a graphic engine that looks to be second to none; there are towns we visited in the import version that were literally jaw-droppingly gorgeous. The texture quality easily makes Grandia II one of the best-looking RPGs ever, just look at the screenshots. However, what these pictures don't display is the silky-smooth framerate, fluid animation and the small details you'll experience while playing—like the way the main hub of a town will slowly fade into mist in the background as you climb a nearby hill. And then there's the battles: think of the confrontations in the first Grandia with way better graphics (wait until you see some of the FMV-infused spell effects) and much more strategic gameplay.

Many people considered Grandia to be the Saturn's "Final Fantasy" when it was first released in Japan, and the comparison is being made once again with the Dreamcast and Grandia II. Will it be able to live up to this lofty claim? Better yet, will Dreamcast fans finally be able to own an RPG they can be proud of? Hopefully we'll have the answer in time for the holidays. 👾

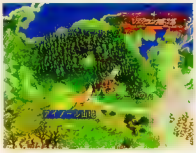


Chaotic action, beautiful spell effects, and full-motion video clips saturate the intense battle scenes.

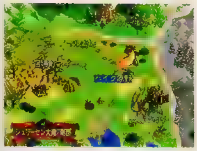


LINEAR GAMEPLAY

No Alternative



One of the main problems in the original Grandia was the super linear gameplay. Very rarely was there a time you could venture off the beaten path and explore alternate areas—a feature that unfortunately carries over to the sequel. Yes, it could be argued that Grandia releases are story-based games, and giving players the opportunity to go off and explore on their own would disrupt the flow. But, at the same time, it sucks to have a game look this good and be stuck on a flat overworld map—one that you can't even control a character on. How it works is every time you complete a quest in a town or dungeon, the map often displays one new area you can click on, and then you instantly travel to it. There is little in the way of optional dungeons, towns, or even mini-games of any kind. Grandia II, like the first release, doesn't try to keep gamers interested by offering extras of any kind, instead the game just presents a compelling story (along with some nifty graphics). Hopefully that will be enough for today's RPG fans.

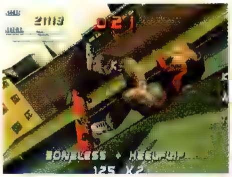


LIKE A HAWK

Young Hawk-wannabes should head over to the Birdhouse (www.b-house.com) and grab a Tony Hawk deck. You can find stuff from other skaters in the game there too.

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2

Activision must have liked the job **Treyarch** did on the first THPS port, because they're back developing the DC version of Tony Hawk 2 for a **November** release. Like the first game, THPS2 doesn't promise anything new over the PS version as far as gameplay is concerned, but who cares? The game already rocks, why mess with perfection? We'll be plenty happy with the kick-ass graphics only Sega's system can deliver.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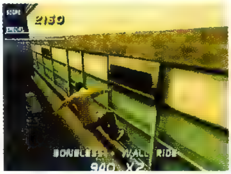
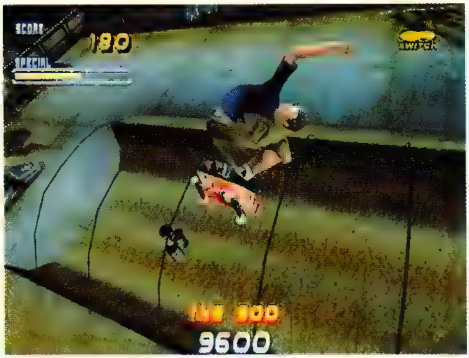
BONELESS + HEELFLIP
125 X2


2130
BONELESS + WALL RIDE
940 X2


SCORE
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SPECIAL
SWITCH
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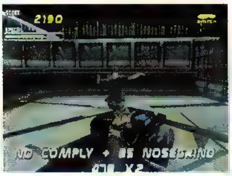
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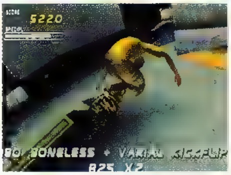
NO COMPLY + BS NOSEGRIND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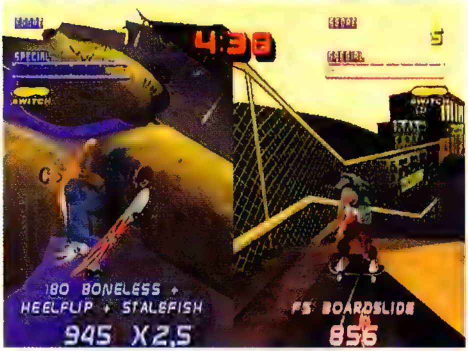
BONELESS + VARIAL KICKFLIP
825 X2


SCORE
4:38
SPECIAL
SWITCH
180 BONELESS +
HEELFLIP + STALEFISH
945 X2.5
SCORE
5
SPECIAL
FS BOARDSLIDE
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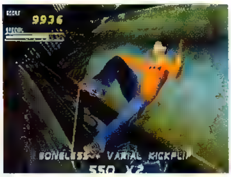
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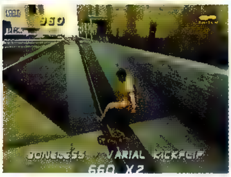
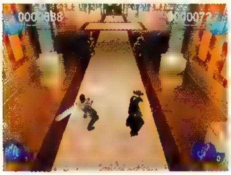
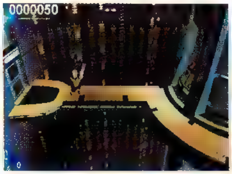
BONELESS + VARIAL KICKFLIP
550 X2

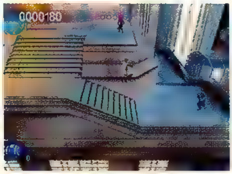

BONELESS + VARIAL KICKFLIP
660 X2

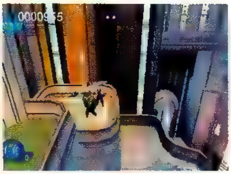
Jedi Power Battles

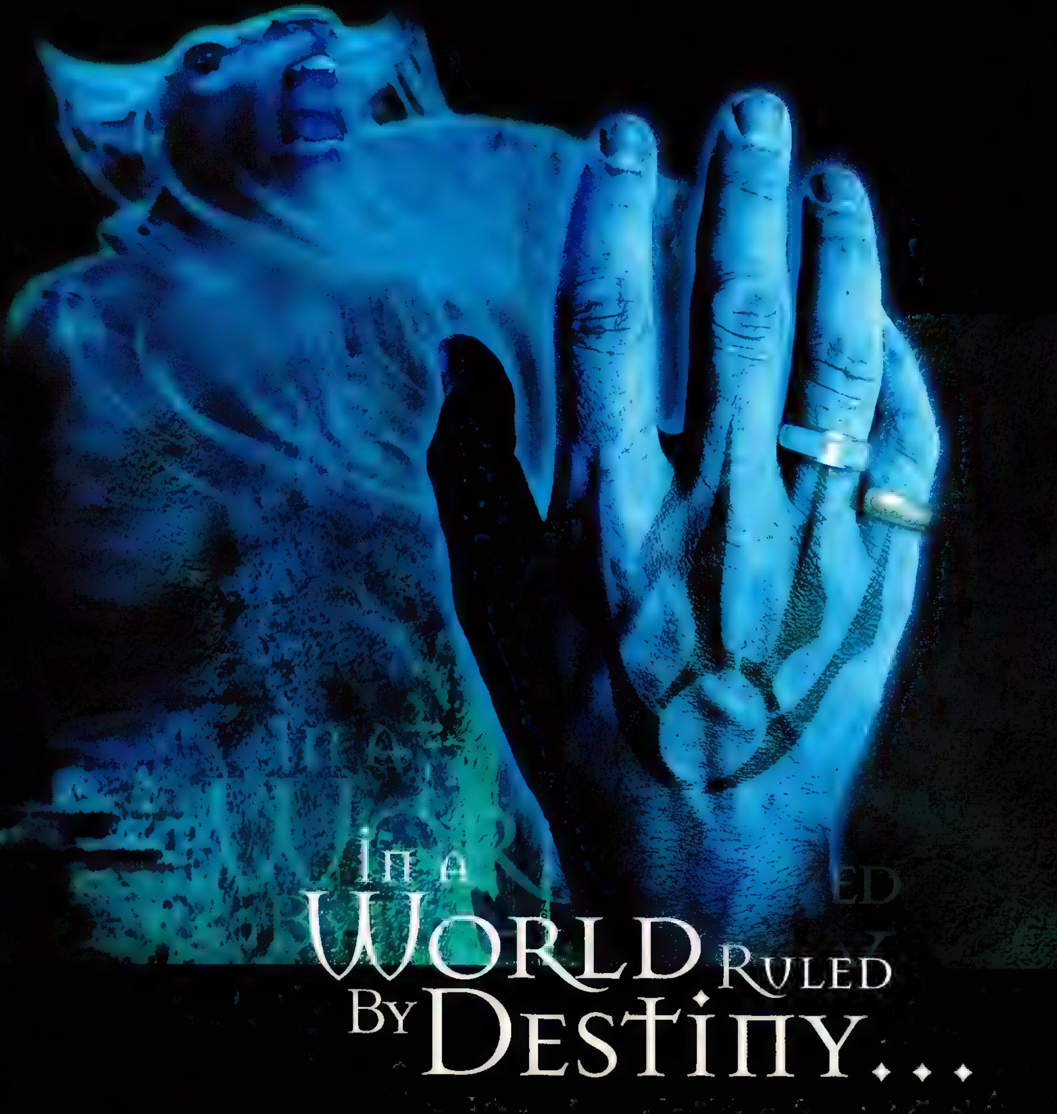
LucasArts' second Dreamcast game is more an upgrade than a straight port of the PlayStation action/fighting title Jedi Power Battles. Yes, it certainly looks better than the original version—LucasArts actually went in and replaced every texture, but the changes don't end there. Dreamcast owners will be able to enjoy an exclusive one-on-one fighting mode, new characters (Ki-Adi Mundi and the Battle Droid are unlockable), Darth Maul with a double-bladed saber, and, with the keyboard plugged into the system, you'll be able to go in and actually modify the game (assuming you have rudimentary skills in BASIC). We gave Ki-Adi Mundi a flower petal for a head, shrank him down to a few inches tall, and then drew colorful lines across the screen. Nifty! Look for the latest version of Jedi Power Battles this **fall**.





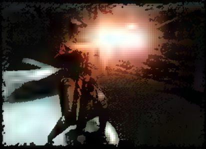


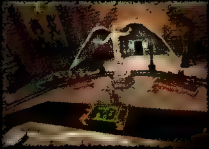



In a
World Ruled
By Destiny...

...AND TORN BY CONFLICT

PlayStation®2





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RATING PENDING RP CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Born with the mark of a summoner, Joseph of Ciran is dangerous and hunted, but the only hope for salvation. His ability to call forth sixteen different creatures, demons, dragons, and elementals, and control their every move gives him the power to topple empires, challenge gods, and prevent the evil [illegible] from [illegible] the land. Crossing a massive 3D world, from the sewers to the cities to the forests, he seeks the rings that provide him the power to summon. Along the way, Joseph encounters an enormous cast of characters, including his three party members. Together, they will discover the secrets of the rings and face the dangers that lie ahead.

Prepare for an original, epic fantasy RPG.

SAVIORS CAN BE DESTROYERS.
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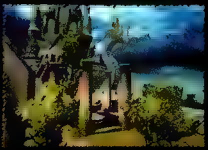

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Saviors can be Destroyers.
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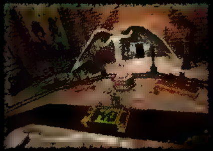
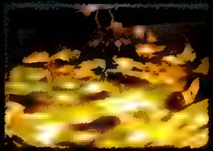
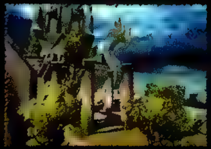
Born with the mark of a summoner, Joseph of Ciran is dangerous and wanted but the only hope for salvation. His ability to call forth sixteen different demons, dragons, and elementals, and control their every move gives him the power to topple empires, challenge gods, and prevent the evil Murod from [illegible]. The [illegible] Crossing a massive new world, from the sewers to the cities to the forests, he seeks the rings that provide him the power to summon. Along the way, Joseph encounters an enormous cast of characters, including his three party members. Together, they will discover the secrets of the rings and face the dangers that lie ahead.

Prepare for an original, epic fantasy RPG.







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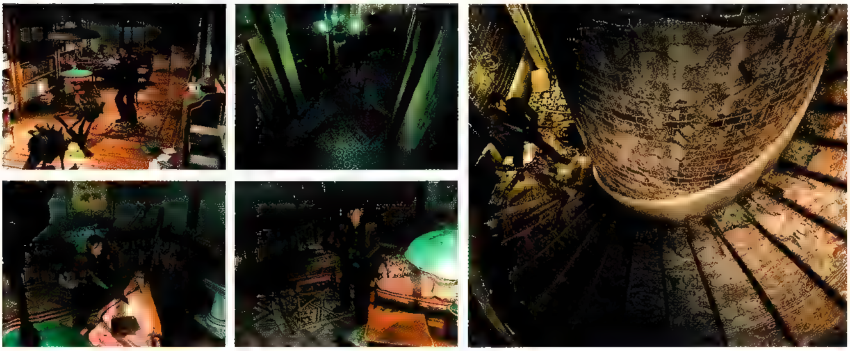
Woop! Woop!

SCAREDY CAT

You may be alone in the dark, but are you afraid of the dark? If so, then you have lygophobia, you chicken. But there are people who have it worse than you. There are all kinds of phobias. See what freaks you out at http://www.gananoque.com/phobia/list.html

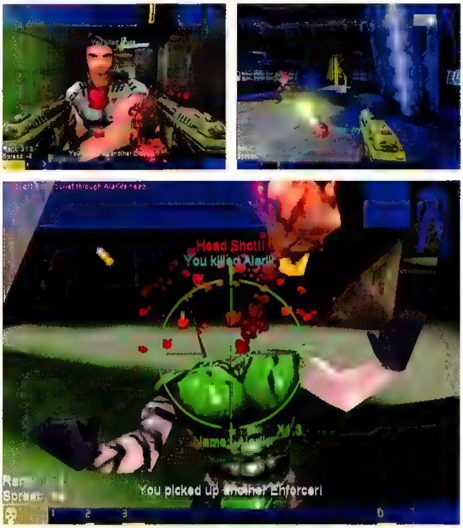
Alone in the Dark: The New Nightmare

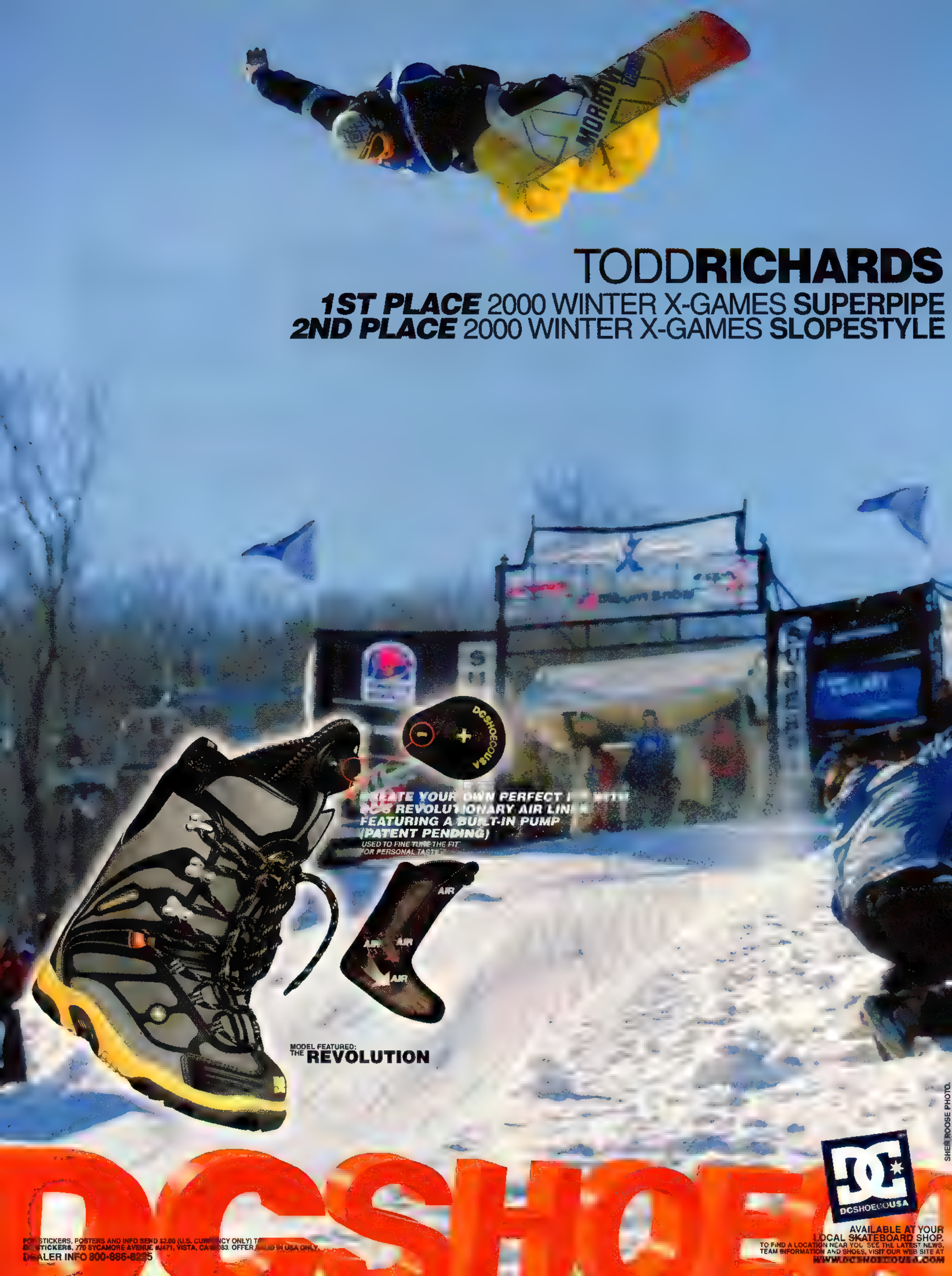
Infogrames has been working on this one for a while now (we first saw it at E3 two years ago), but all that time in development seems to be paying off. While the PlayStation version is quite impressive in its own right, the DC edition of AitD is absolutely stunning. Yes, these are real screenshots. The DC's buttload of VRAM allows for super hi-res backgrounds without the dithering found in the PS version. The DC version also provides real-time shadows, better lighting effects, and detailed character models with over three times as many polygons as the PS game. Developer **Darkworks** is putting the screws on this one for a **first-quarter 2001** release.



Unreal Tournament

You can't blame **Infogrames** for seeing the imminent release of Quake III on the Dreamcast, complete with SegaNet support, and asking, "What the hell are we sitting on Unreal Tournament for?" Keeping in mind how much the French publisher seems to like supporting the Sega powerhouse it's not surprising that they've decided to bring their Quake-killer to the Dreamcast, complete with eight-way Internet play (or two-player split-screen if you're too cheap to hook up to the Web). That's right, now the two arena-based first-person shooters that took the PC gaming world by storm are coming home to the Dreamcast, which should make Sega fans very happy considering that future PS2 owners will only be able to play Unreal Tournament on a four-way split-screen. Yuck! While the version we played was very early and fairly sluggish (developer **Secret Level** is concentrating on faithfully porting over all the code before tweaking the framerate and Internet-compatibility), the Dreamcast's PC-styled guts should make the conversion a relatively painless one. Don't let the screens on this page fool you, we're sure by the time this game comes to market it'll look just as good as the PC version, maybe even better. Thirty-five maps to play on, 10 different weapons, spectator-cams, advanced 'bot AI and improved HUDs all in the rumored lag-free environment of SegaNet—Unreal Tournament gets ready to frag this **fall.**





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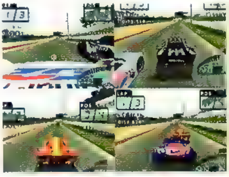
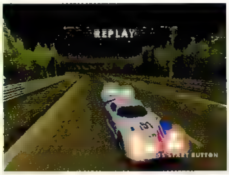
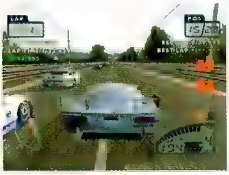
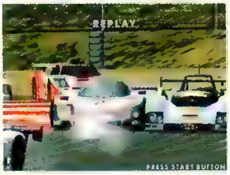
TRAGEDY AT LE MANS

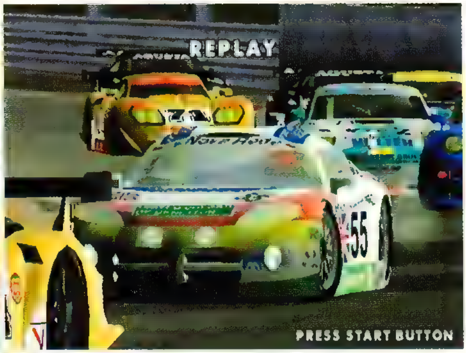
The 1955 24-hour race at Le Mans saw the worst accident in motorsports history when Pierre Levech's Mercedes collided with a slower car and flipped into the grandstands, killing Levech and over 80 spectators. Following the wreck, Mercedes pulled out of racing completely for 22 years.

Test Drive Le Mans

None of that fancy-schmancy online stuff here. **Infogrames** is only committed to giving DC owners a kick-ass port of Le Mans. They're on track, too, as this version features more cars, tracks, cups and some absolutely stunning graphics and effects. Just take a look at these screenshots and picture the game moving at a solid 30 frames per second. Scheduled for a **November** release, this one's gonna be awesome!



REPLAY
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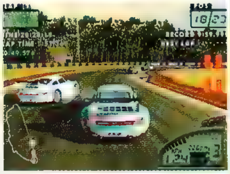
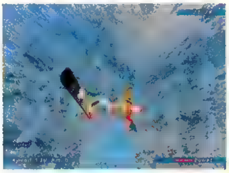
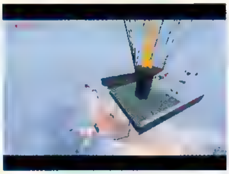
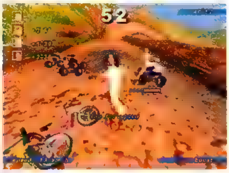
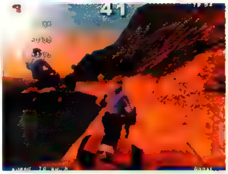
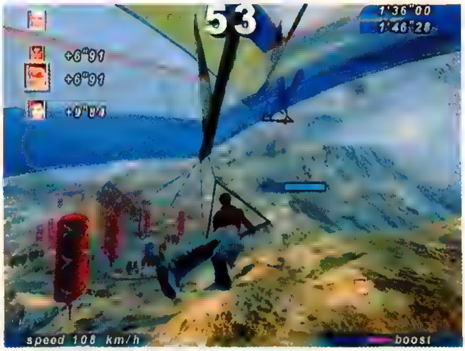


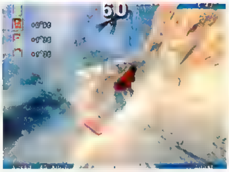
Xtreme Sports

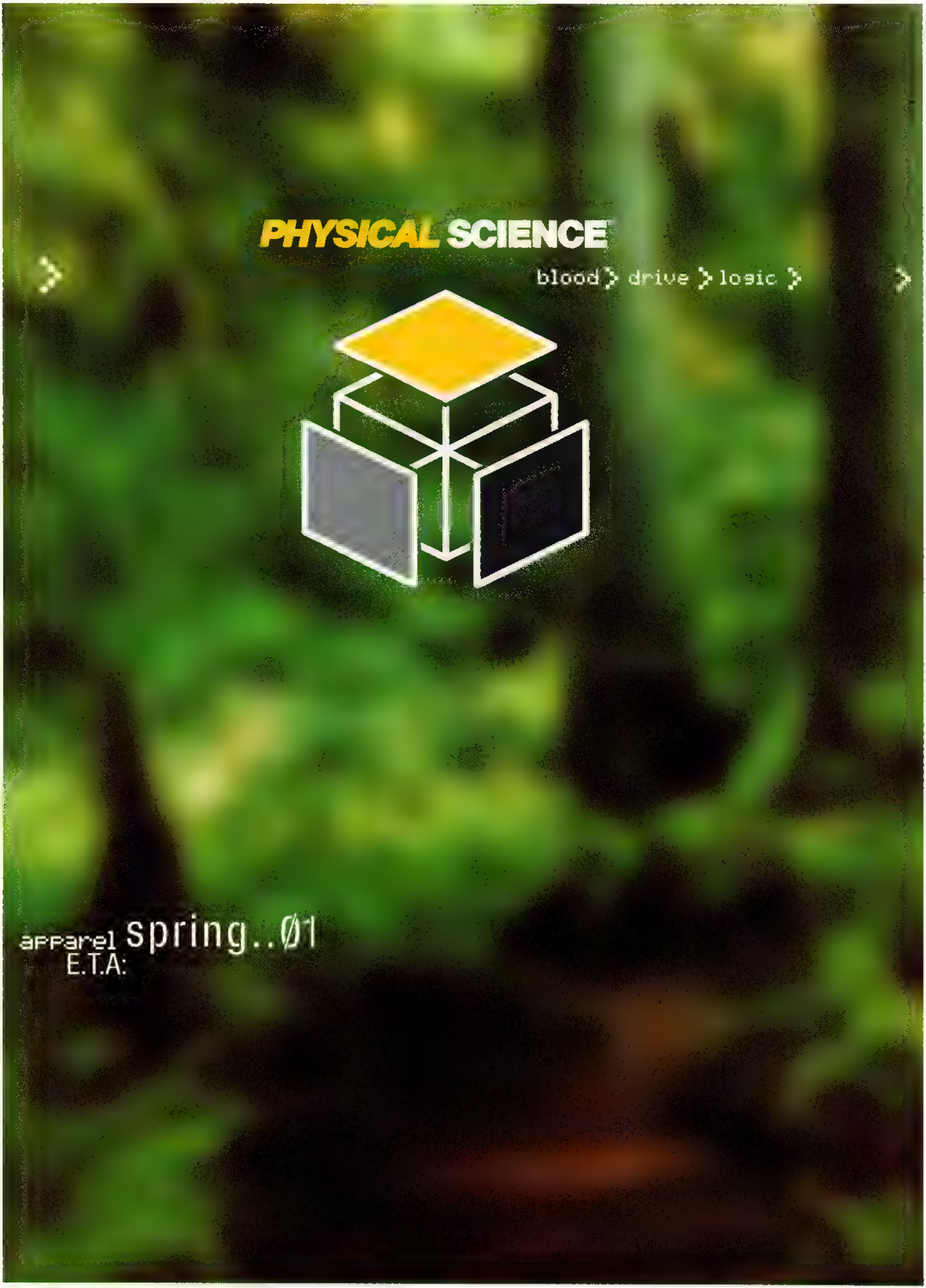
Infogrames is getting extreme with their latest release in the Sega Sports lineup, **Xtreme Sports**. Players will tackle some tough terrain racing mountain bikes, ATVs and snowboards, not to mention some stomach-churning flights on the hang glider, all in the same race! Players can switch from one vehicle to another during a race while competing on 12 different tracks based in Scotland, the Himalayas, Streyn and Maui. Connecting to the Internet will allow players to upload high scores and download ghost-players to compete against, as well as unlocking extra track sections. Even though we've come to expect DC games to look great, XS still garnered a few oohs and aahs at the office, a testament to just how great it's coming along. XS only needs some minor tweaking before its release this **October**.





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Mild Animated Violence
Mild Language

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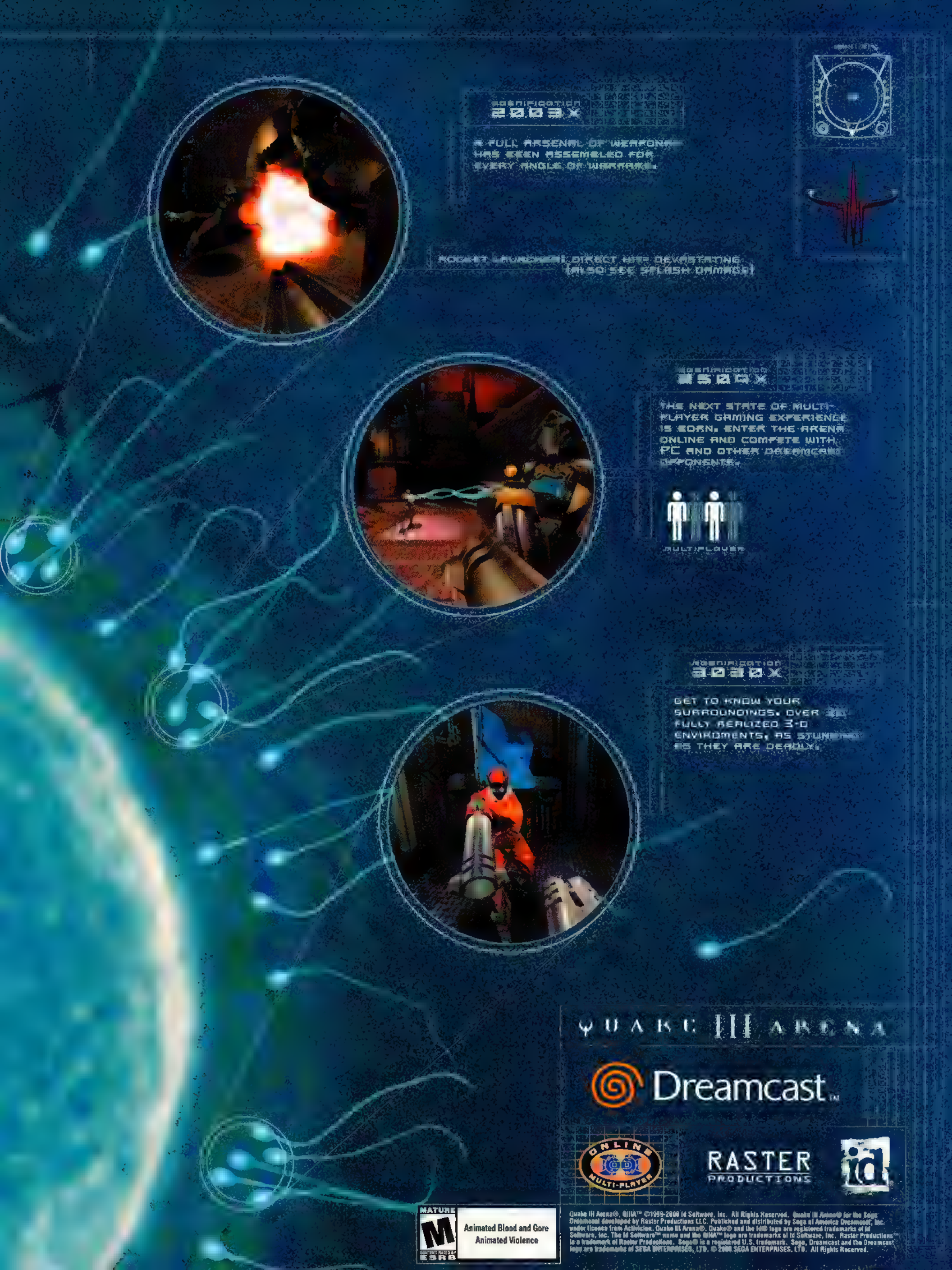
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Animated Blood and Gore
Animated Violence

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TEEN
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CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB
Animated Violence
Mild Language
Dreamcast

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Stopping is a bad idea.

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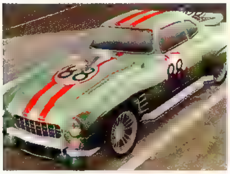
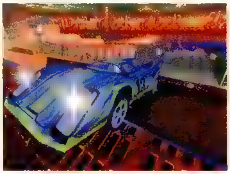
WHAT'S UP DOC?

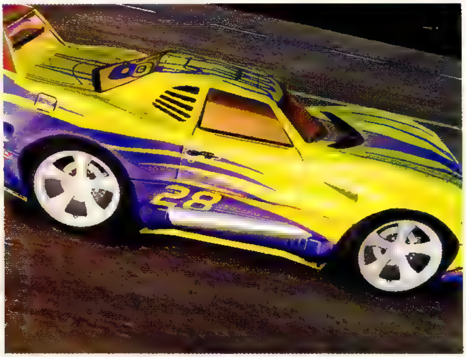
Best known for being the voice of Bugs Bunny, Mel Blanc (1908-1989) actually hated eating carrots. He used to do the eating sounds for Bugs at the end of each recording session, to be edited in where needed.

Speed Devils 2

This **November** Dreamcast owners get this follow-up to perhaps the most overlooked launch title back in '99. Besides the usual upgrades everyone expects in a sequel (better graphics, more cars and tracks, etc.), **Ubi Soft** intends to take full advantage of SegaNet with Speed Devils 2. If they manage to combine online play with the smooth framerate, blistering speed and unique gameplay of the original, SD2 looks to be a winner.

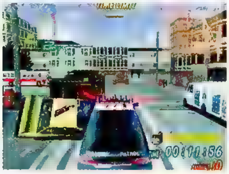


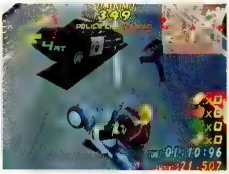


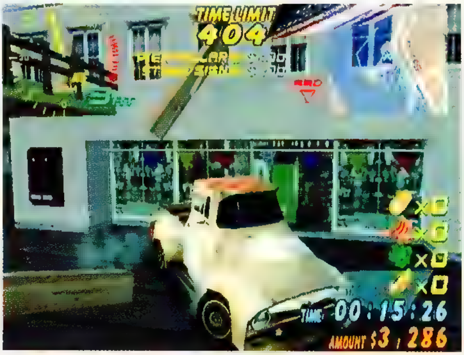


Super Runabout: San Francisco Edition

You probably recognize this game by now. Since we last previewed it **Interplay** has translated this **Climax** game, slapped an extended title on it, and plans to bring it stateside this month. We didn't get a reviewable version in time for this issue, so expect a review next month.

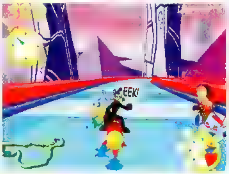


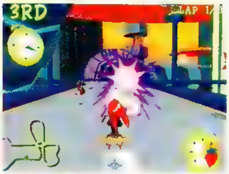


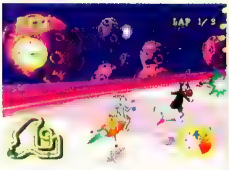


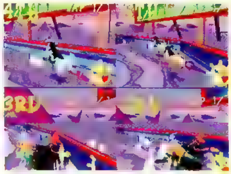
Looney Tunes Space Race

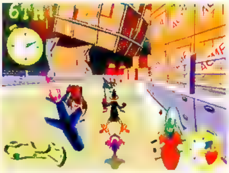
Infogrames is going license crazy! At least this one is better than Wacky Racers. This **November** release features all your favorites: Bugs, Daffy, Wile E. and more, racing rockets around a collection of cartoon-based tracks like the Pyramids of Mars and Planet Acme. Drop anvils and pianos on up to three of your friends in the multiplayer game, or work to unlock all the secrets in the single-player campaign.

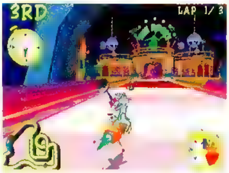












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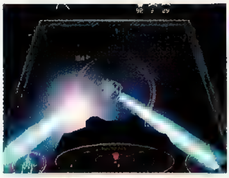
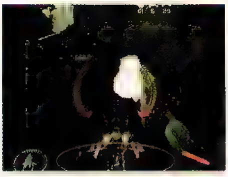
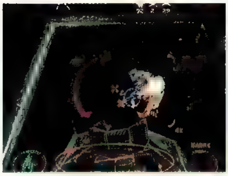
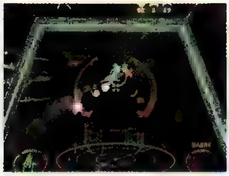
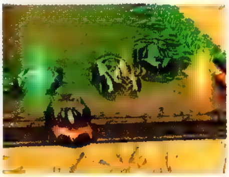
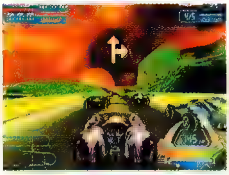
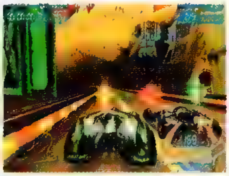
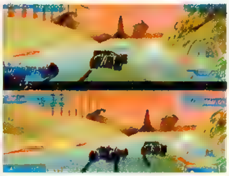
StarLancer

Though we didn't get a chance to try the online aspect of StarLancer this month, the rest of **Crave's** PC-to-DC port is looking pretty authentic. All of the ships feature lots of detail, and the pyrotechnics when you send those Coalition dogs to meet their maker are very impressive. All this with no slowdown whatsoever. On top of that the convoluted control scheme really isn't too overwhelming after a few minutes' practice. Choose your wingmen and ready for launch in **October**.

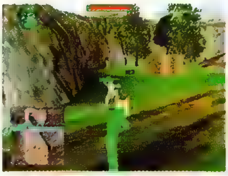
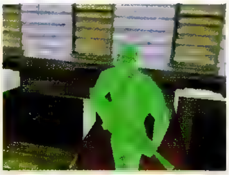
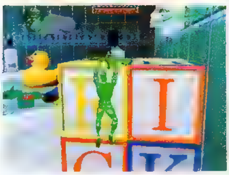
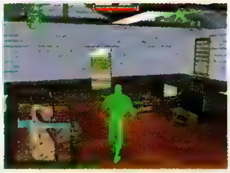
POD 2

Ubi Soft hopes this will be the first combat racer available for online play through SegaNet. The gameplay is very reminiscent of their old N64/PS game S.C.A.R.S. Drive one of a half-dozen very odd-shaped vehicles around a collection of psychedelic tracks rife with power-ups and weapons. This **November** players around the world will not only be able to log on and race against up to four other contestants, but see where they rank in the POD "online hall of fame" as well.

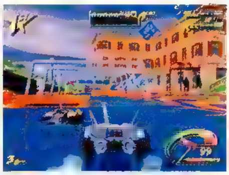
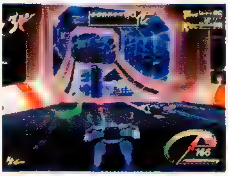
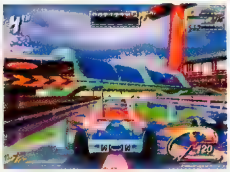
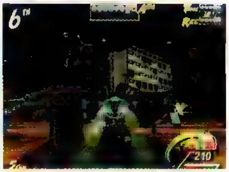
Army Men: Sarge's Heroes

Since 3DO hasn't seen fit to flood the DC with Army Men games, **Midway** picked up the slack. This shooter doesn't quite push the Dreamcast, but it offers four-player split-screen action, better graphics (not by much, so calm down) and an improved framerate from the PS version. Still, it's Army Men, so if you dig it, that's good, if you don't, this isn't likely gonna change your mind! Sarge's Heroes ships this **fall**.

Stunt GP

Infogrames' GP Racer is coming along nicely. The graphics are looking sharp and the control, well, it's still being tweaked. Cars can be upgraded by spending points earned during the races—the more insane the stunt, the more points earned. Chain stunts together for combos and double or triple the points awarded. Although the version we played didn't include it, a four-player mode is provided as well. The developer, **Team 17**, is putting the finishing touches on this title for its **fall** release.

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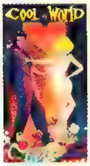
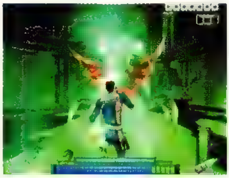
DRIVIN' TO THE BRINK OF INSANITY.
WATER OUTLET
CHAMBE
NDER
PISTON RINGS
PISTON
CRANK
CRA
AIR TIGHT CAP
FROM PUMP
PRESSURE 2 LBS
VP
VANISHING POINT™



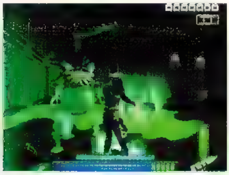
COOL COOL WORLD

A 'toon that, well, didn't turn out so cool is Ralph Bakshi's 1992 flick *Cool World*. Dubbed "Roger Rabbit for adults," it was turned into a video game for the Super NES courtesy of Ocean—and was to be a Sega CD title too.

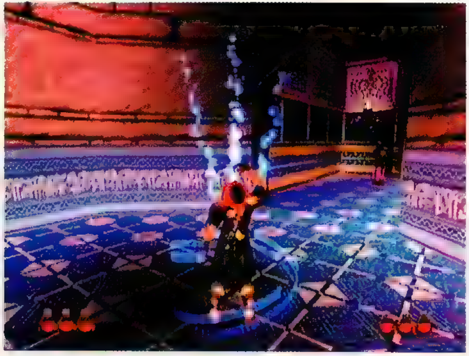
Max Steel



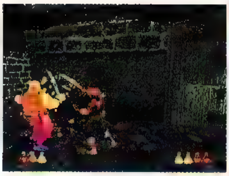
Max Steel, **Mattel's November** release based on the popular cartoon show, plays a lot like the Dreamcast sword-fighting action title Draconus, and for good reason. Developed by Treyarch, the same team behind Crave's medieval mayhem game, Max Steel is similar to their first console attempt—but also vastly improved. Aside from beefing up the visuals, the game engine is now refined, allowing for things like a zoom feature for sniper weapons and an improved framerate. Like the television show, players will be able to use Max's Nanotech powers to grant super strength or the ability to turn invisible for a short while.



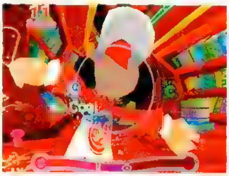
Prince of Persia



The latest in a string of PC to Dreamcast conversions, PoP is coming to Sega's system this **November** from **Mattel Interactive**. But unlike many PC ports, Avalanche Software rebuilt this title from scratch to better utilize the DC's strengths. That means better camera angles, improved visuals and tighter control—which is good considering the amount of sword swinging and perilous jumping you have to do.



Cool Cool Toon



SNK's first foray into the music genre breaks new ground in one area: control. Like all music games it's "press the right button at the right time," but you also need to point in different directions with the analog stick and make sweeping controller motions. The music's not great, but you can upload your data to the Net (shown below) or use it in conjunction with Cool Cool Jam for NGPC. Available **now in Japan**.

1F
3F
4F
5F
Check it out!!

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His legs take him 200m in 19.32 seconds.
[illegible]-Time Gold Medalist Michael Johnson

How fast are your fingers?

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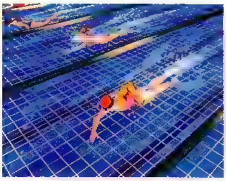

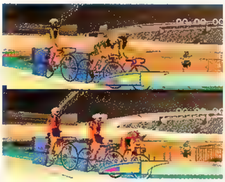

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The Hot Rods Of
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THE SEACAT

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Now that you can challenge anyone to a race online - anytime, anywhere in the country - knowing your cars can separate the small town punk from the primetime player. Take the Seacat. Nice car. Its power around the corners just might help you muscle through Pod's six mercilessly interactive, multi-layered tracks. But don't take our word for it. Get in there yourself. Because right now you've got nothing, podboy, and everyone in the online circuit is laughing in your single-player face.

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
		✓ SIGN-UP FOR SEGANET	✓ GET MY 50 FREE HOURS ONLINE!	1 ~~R[illegible]E K-2 [illegible]LAP 2:32~~	2 ~~R[illegible]E OFF[illegible] w/ [illegible]LAP 4.~~	3 RACE OFFLINE w/JAY BEST LAP 1:10
4 RACE OFFLINE	5 HUGE ONLINE MATCH	6	7 RACE OFFLINE w/ MARC	8 RACE VOLCANO BEST LAP 1:24	9	10
11	12 RACE ODD ROCK BEST LAP 5:20	13	14 ONLINE MATCH BEST LAP 3:21	15	16 RACE ALL DAY —CALL IN SICK	17 ONLINE MATCH
18	19	20	21	22	2 WWW.PODGOD.COM	4
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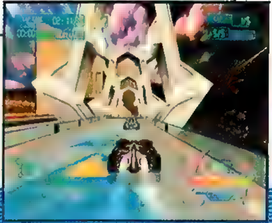

Dreamcast.

SEGANET

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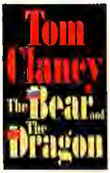
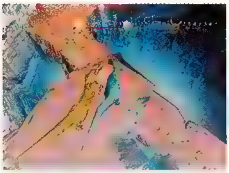


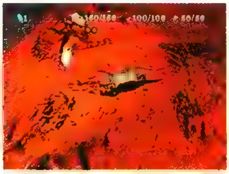
RAINBOW DITCHED?

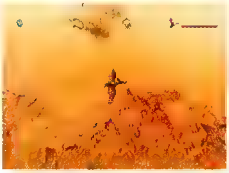
While Rainbow Six: Rogue Spear is more or less a rehashed sequel, Tom Clancy has just released his newest book, *The Bear and the Dragon*, to stores. It takes place in the same universe as Rainbow Six, but focuses more on President Jack Ryan trying to deal with crises involving Russia and China. Can there be a video game based on this far behind?

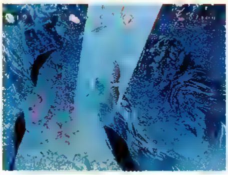
Disney's Dinosaur

The idea behind **Ubi Soft**'s conversion of Disney's latest rendered movie is an interesting one: you've got to use all the different powers of a group of dinos to help them help each other pass certain areas. In other words, Dinosaur is a puzzle game of sorts, but it carries plenty of action. It's quite a bit different than the PlayStation version, so if you played that pile don't let it keep you from trying this one when it arrives this **fall**.



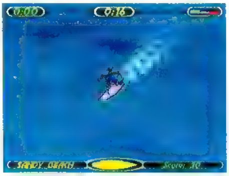


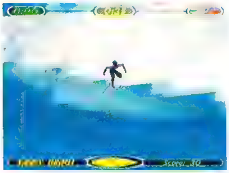


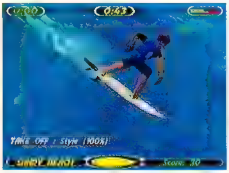


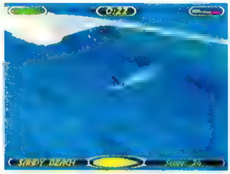
Championship Surfer

Developed by the Australian-based **Krome Studios**, a bunch of surfing nuts, Championship Surfer sets out to mix realistic surfing action with the arcadey feel of a game like Tony Hawk's Pro Skater. Instead of trying to catch waves, it sets you going almost instantly after you fall—as if you're on one continuous wave. The DC version looks great, as it sports some very cool water and wave animations. CS hangs 10 this **fall**.



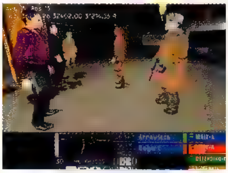


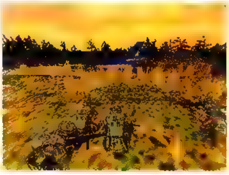


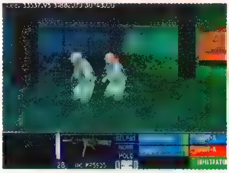


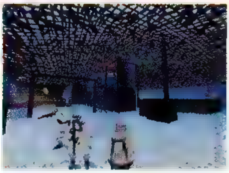
Rainbow Six: Rogue Spear

Majesco's sequel to Rainbow Six is looking pretty nice. This time team Rainbow has to deal with the Russian mafia as well as renegade Middle Eastern terrorists. The game includes the complete Urban add-on pack, 10 new playable characters (in addition to the original 20), and numerous weapons upgrades. Also new are sniper support, harsher weather effects and improved multiplayer. Rogue Spear hits the market this **October**.



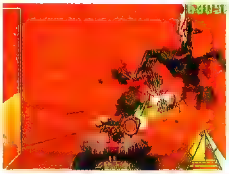


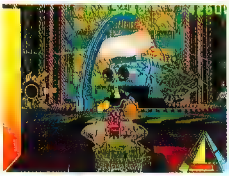


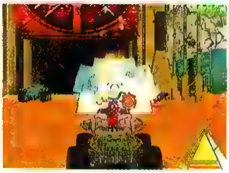


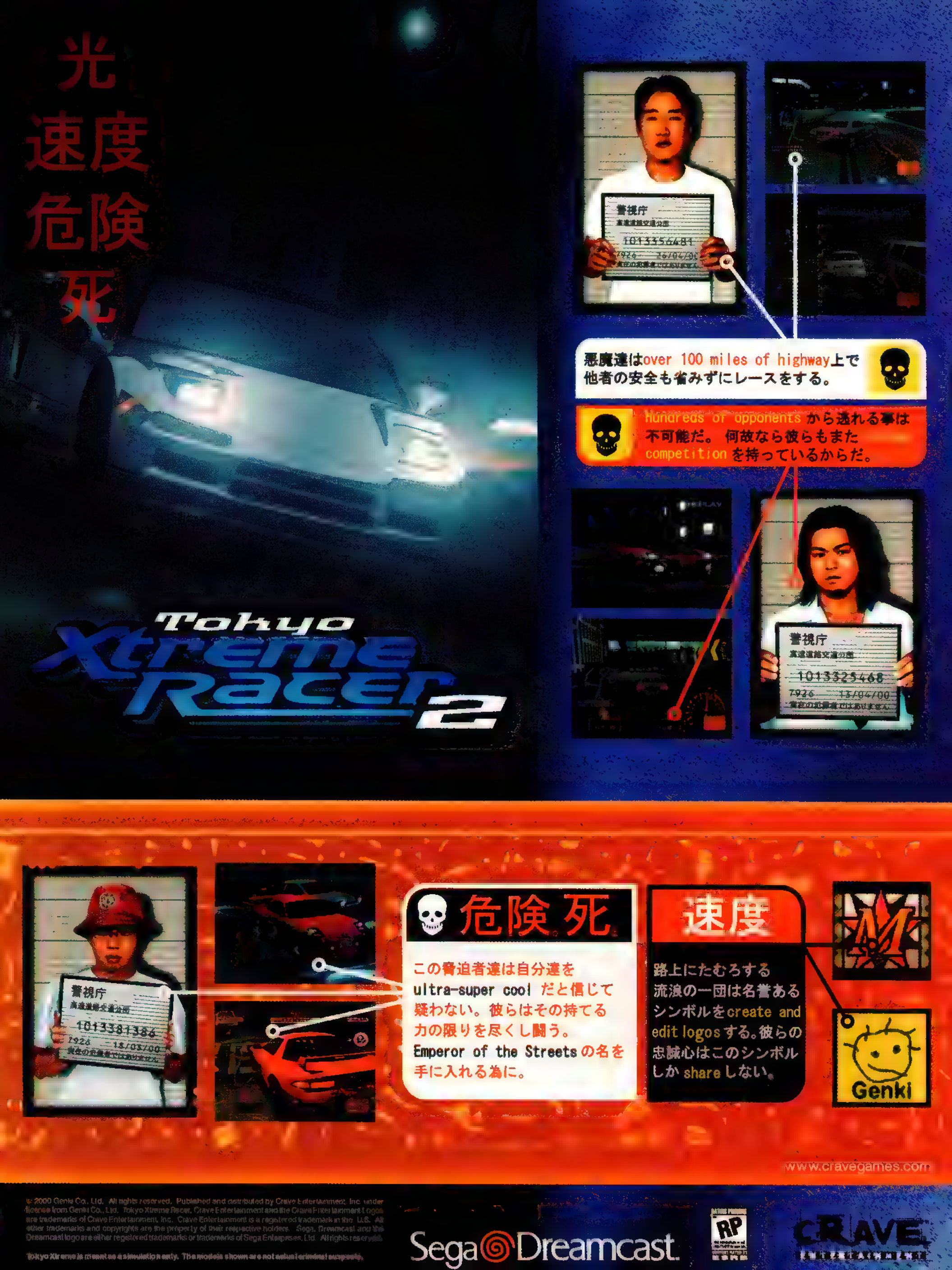
Red Dog

Almost two years ago, developer **Argonaut** showed this game and then it silently disappeared from the release lists. Now, it has re-emerged almost complete, and is looking mighty fine. You control an ugly off-road moon-buggy that has a unique array of weapons, the best of which is a grid-like reflective shield that bounces projectile back at who fired them. The triggers are used to accelerate, while the analog stick is used to point your gun and choose where you want the move. Challenge areas (such as races) can be opened up as you complete the main levels, where you can earn better weapons and armor if completed. The levels are impressive, and the bosses enormous. This is looking like it could be a sleeper hit when it arrives this **October**.








光
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Tokyo Xtreme Racer 2
警視庁
高速道路交通分局
1013356481
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実在の犯罪者ではありません
警視庁
高速道路交通分局
1013381386
7926 18/03/00
実在の犯罪者ではありません
Genki

悪魔達はover 100 miles of highway上で他者の安全も省みずにレースをする。

hundreds of opponents から逃れる事は不可能だ。何故なら彼らもまたcompetition を持っているからだ。

危険 死

この脅迫者達は自分達をultra-super cool だと信じて疑わない。彼らはその持てる力の限りを尽くし闘う。Emperor of the Streets の名を手に入れる為に。

速度

路上にたむろする流浪の一団は名誉あるシンボルをcreate and edit logosする。彼らの忠誠心はこのシンボルしか share しない。

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Tokyo Xtreme is meant as a simulation only. The models shown are not actual criminal suspects.

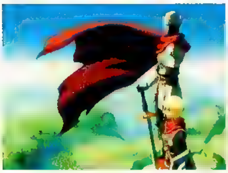
Sega Dreamcast

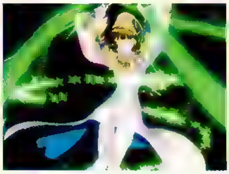
RP

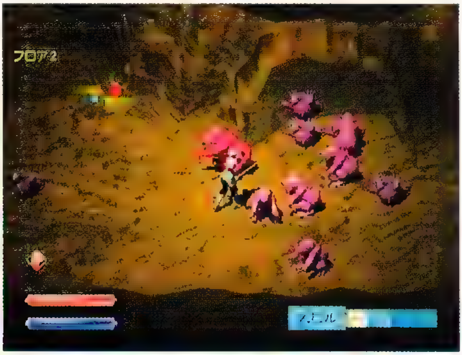
CRAVE ENTERTAINMENT

Rune Jade

Diablo II hits the Dreamcast...kinda. Rune Jade plays just like the PC action/RPG hit, right down to the online aspects. Choose from a Grappler, Ninja, Knight or Rune Master and form a party with three buddies over the Net for real-time fightin' fun. Considering the insane popularity of Diablo, this would seem like a safe bet for the fledgling online console community. Rune Jade is out **now in Japan**.

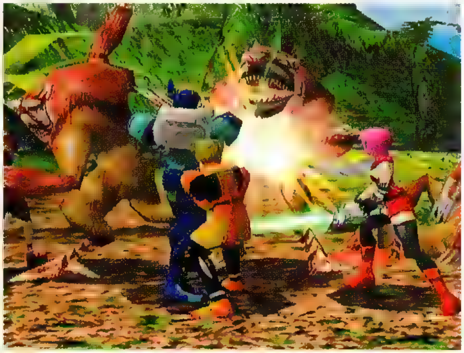


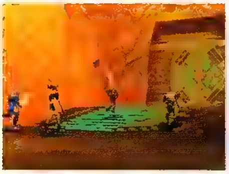


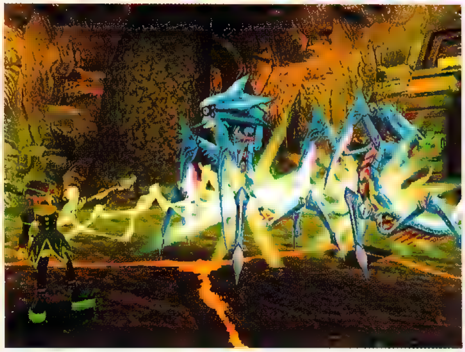


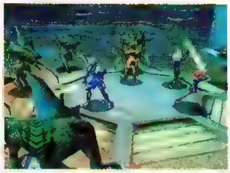
Phantasy Star Online

The worldwide simultaneous release of **Sega**'s upcoming online RPG has been pushed back a bit to **early next year**, but after seeing these new pics we're willing to wait. Gamers can play PSO over the Net in parties of up to four people (or alone with three AI characters) in any of five languages—Japanese, English, French, German and Spanish. No characters return from earlier PS games, but a few enemies do look familiar...





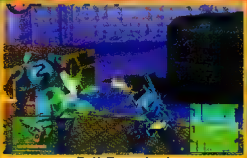


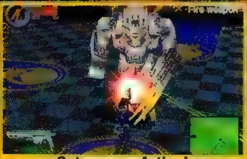


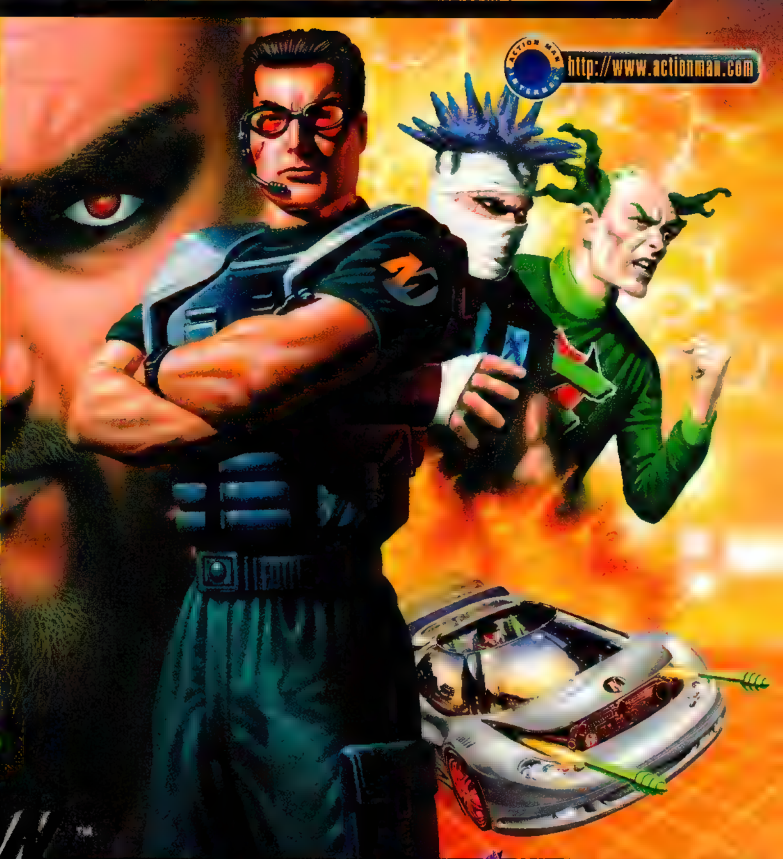
AMP UP THE ACTION!

Mechanical Menaces!

Awesome Vehicles!


Evil Enemies!


X - Fire Weapon
Outrageous Action!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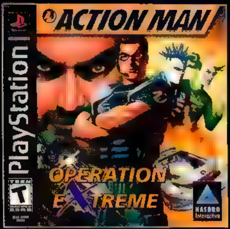
PlayStation
ACTION MAN
OPERATION EXTREME
TEEN
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PlayStation

TEEN T Mild Animated Violence

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VITALITY

Yes, Regina is back in the action-packed sequel to the blockbuster survival-horror hit. Sent in for search and rescue, she is now armed with even more dino-fighting, heavy artillery. Only Regina is prepared for the adrenaline-pumping battles the recon team will soon encounter. More action! More intensity! More prehistoric predators! One question remains... are you the hunter – or the hunted?

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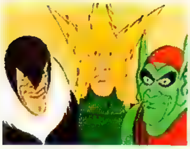
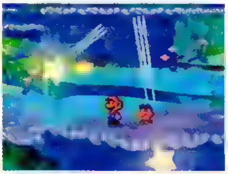


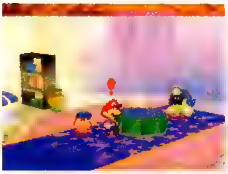
WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

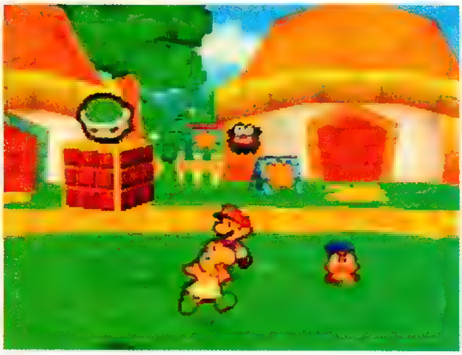
Recognize these guys? They're a few of the villains from the original Spider-Man series, which hit the airwaves on Sept. 9, 1967. Some of the originals are still around, even today. For a real treat, check out the original theme song at www.topthemes.com. It's groovy.

Paper Mario

Since we just got the import version of **Nintendo**'s famous plumber's latest adventure, here's a quick update (look for a full preview next month). Like Super Mario RPG (SNES), it combines RPG aspects (gaining levels, turn based combat, etc.) with reflex actions (timed button presses for extra damage, platform jumping), all within the brightly colored confines of the Mario universe. We can't wait until **Dec. 26** to play it in English.

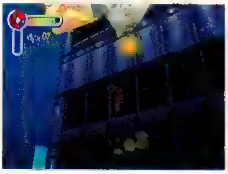






Spider-Man

Making his debut on the N64 courtesy of **Activision**, Spider-Man takes to the skyscrapers in full force this **fall**. As one might expect, the animation is noticeably more fluid than the PS version. Don't worry, most of Spidey and Stan Lee's voice-overs should squeeze into the cart, if not every stitch of script found on the PlayStation disc. As for the gameplay, if you've seen Spider-Man do it in the comics, you can do it in the game—sling between buildings, climb on walls and tangle enemies in your web. It makes for some real variety in each level of the game, something not a lot of action titles can claim. Rhino, Venom and, of course, J. Jonah Jameson are some of the familiar faces you'll have to deal with as you help the wall-crawler unravel the sinister plottings of Doctor Octopus.



STAY ON THE SUBWAY

THE GLADIATOR BLOODSPORT OF THE FUTURE

Unreal™ Tournament coming this Fall for the PlayStation®2 and the Sega Dreamcast™

MATURE M Animated Violence Animated Blood and Gore

Dreamcast

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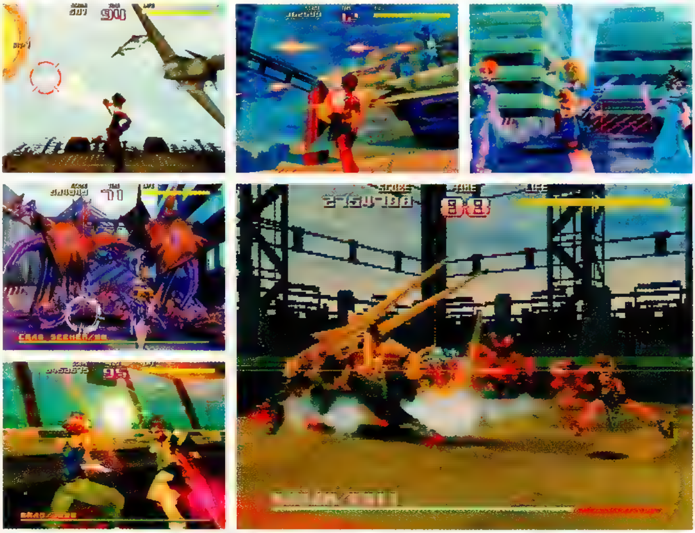
$247,000,000

MONEY. WELL. SPENT.

The number of dollars people shelled out for Pay Per View wrestling in 1999 alone. That's a whole lot of Slim Jims!

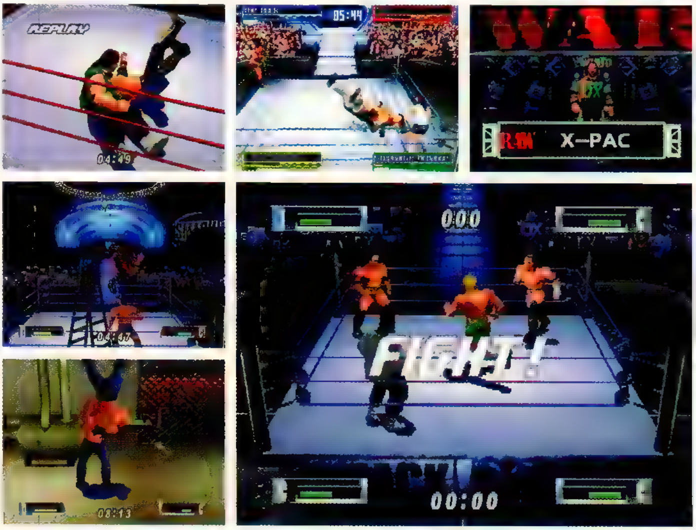
Sin and Punishment

The excellent Japanese developer **Treasure** (Gunstar Heroes, Mischief Makers) is finally back on the N64, doing this interesting shooter for **Nintendo** due **October**. From what we played at Space World, Sin and Punishment feels similar to other action/ shooters like Star Fox and Panzer Dragoon: You control your character (left right and jump) with the D-pad as she runs into the screen, aiming a crosshair with the analog stick to take out huge swarms of enemies and giant bosses. Two players can also play simultaneously, with one controlling the character and the other where she aims and fires. S&P looked great, with great style and intense action, and no slowdown—the N64 needs more games like this!



WWF No Mercy

Tack on another couple hours to your Monday night wrestling stint. When **THQ** releases No Mercy this **November**, dorm rooms and living rooms alike are sure to be packed with mat maniacs looking to take out some aggression in the ring. Choose one of the 65-plus brawlers in a single, tag or survival match and watch the personalized intro as he/she makes his/her way to the ring. Use a ladder to flatten your foe, or mix it up Andy Kaufman-style and take on some of the ladies who frequent the circuit. If you get bored of the Squared Circle, toss your opponent backstage and fight it out behind the scenes in one of three different scenarios. To really get folks roped in, **Aki** is adding transfer Pack support for compatibility with the GBC version, as well as an option to create your own wrestler if you've exhausted the WWF superstars.



FORGET YOUR DRIVER'S LICENSE... YOU'RE GONNA NEED A PASSPORT

Cruis'n Exotica™
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VISA No.
DATE of ISSUE:
VALIDITY of VISA
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CONSUL GENERAL
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Atlantis
Alaska
Tibet
Las Vegas
Mars

Cruis'n Exotica™ returns with a race circuit that gives new meaning to the phrase "world tour." Cruis'n is your passport to 60 tracks in exotic worlds that include Atlantis, the Amazon and Mars. Choose from 28 Nitro-Boosted racing machines, from sleek and trendy sports cars to rough and rugged all-terrain vehicles. Cruis'n Exotica's four player capability gives you non-stop arcade action. Take shortcuts, perform flips, spins and midair stunts in 3 exciting play modes. All new features with the classic Cruis'n gameplay and control you know so well. So, join the tour, explore new worlds and we'll see you in the winner's circle.

NINTENDO 64

GAME BOY COLOR

EVERYONE
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CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Comic Mischief

MIDWAY

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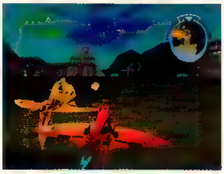
Messa gonna die?

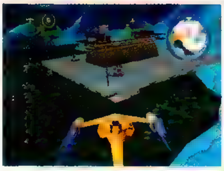
DEATH TO JAR JAR?

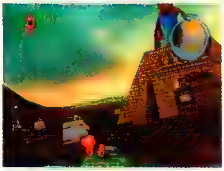
Even though Jar Jar Binks isn't in the game, you can still take out your built-up frustrations on the many other Gungans that populate the levels in Battle for Naboo. The game doesn't reward you for "inadvertently" blowing these annoying aliens away, but it doesn't exactly punish you either.

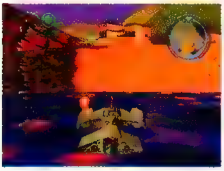
Episode I: Battle for Naboo

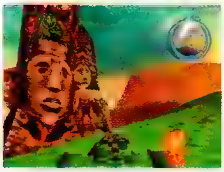
Even though the words "Rogue Squadron" are nowhere to be found in the title, Battle for Naboo (coming out this **fall**) could be considered a follow-up to the popular Nintendo 64 shooting title in almost every way except story and setting. Naboo has the same type of flight/shooter gameplay, but this time it takes place during the events that surround Star Wars: Episode I, plus graphics that make its predecessor pale in comparison. (That nasty fog has been pushed way back.) **LucasArts** has also added a feature that allows you to switch between two vehicles in the middle of a mission, so you might start a mission in a land cruiser, and end the battle flying through the sky in one of those freaky-looking Naboo Fighters.





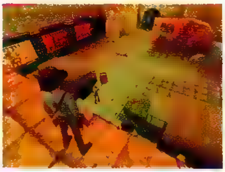


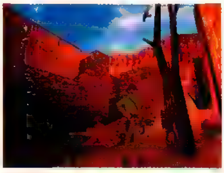


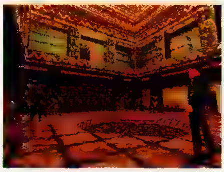


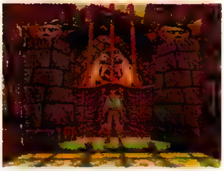
Indiana Jones and the Infernal Machine

The computer version of Indiana Jones and the Infernal Machine was a bit of a flop; the game was fine and all but it had a horrible control scheme. Indiana Jones was a console game at heart, and now it's finally coming home this **December** where it belongs: on the Nintendo 64. **LucasArts** isn't just porting over the PC version though, they've improved the camera, implemented a useful "save anywhere" function, and added many Zelda-like control schemes. Now when you attack a creature, you have a choice between a "loose target" which gives you the ability to easily run away, but at the same time, makes it harder to hit your foe. Or, closer to Zelda's system, a "hard target" which keeps your weapon locked on the enemy, but Indiana's movement speed will be cut in half. Indiana Jones also utilizes the Expansion Pak for improved graphics and framerate.



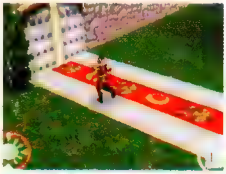


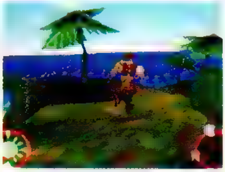


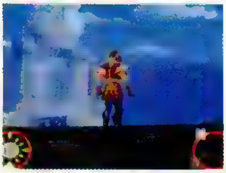


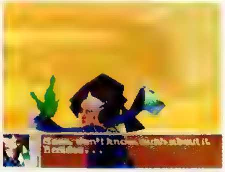
Aidyn Chronicles: The First Mage

Let's face it: It ain't easy being an RPG-loving N64 owner. This fall is shaping up nicely though, with The Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask, Ogre Battle 64 and this new title from **THQ** and Canadian developer **H2o Entertainment** (Tetrisphere, Blues Brothers 2000). Aidyn Chronicles follows a boy named Alaron as he travels from town to town, wandering through dangerous monster-ridden forests, deserts and mountains to fulfill his destiny (where have you heard that before?). Along the way he'll meet up with 10 other warriors who'll join him in his quest (four to a party). The realistic world you travel features changing weather conditions and time passes from night to day, affecting characters with lunar/solar strengths. Battles are turn-based with an eye toward keeping the action up and it supports the Expansion Pak to give it that extra "oomph" in the graphics department. Chris Klug (designer behind TSR's pen-and-paper RPG Dragon Quest) is lending a hand on the game's development, so all you Dice-heads get ready.



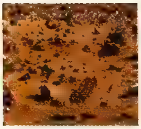






www.TeenFX.com

WOW!

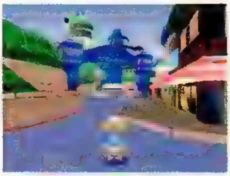


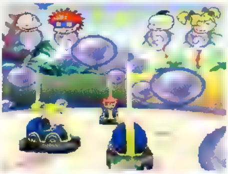
THE RED PLANET

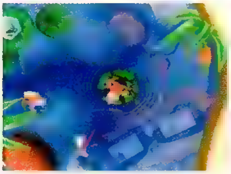
Cruis'n Exotica gives you a chance to race on the planet Mars. With an average temperature range of -116° to 32° F, and an atmosphere comprised mostly of carbon dioxide, Mars wouldn't be our first choice.

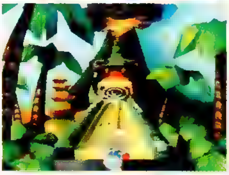
Rugrats in Paris The Movie

In concert with the release of their feature film this **fall**, the Rugrats will be returning for a second adventure on the N64 compliments of **THQ**. Voices from the original cartoon cast pervade 16 levels of 3D gameplay and a handful of bonus scenarios. This time **Avalanche** has included multiplayer support for the mini-games and room for two in the full game, so plenty of Rugrats (er, fans) can get in on the action.



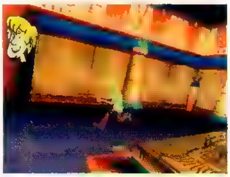


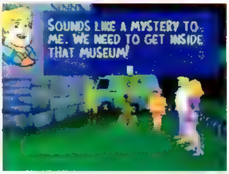


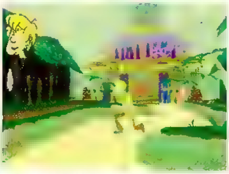


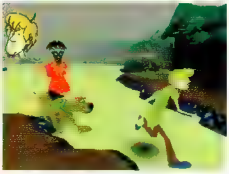
Scooby Doo! Classic Creep Capers

If you think you can do a better job than those meddling kids, developer **Terraglyph** is giving you the keys to the Mystery Machine. In this 3D adventure, you must solve three different mysteries, two of which are based on real episodes from the TV show. The gameplay is skewed young, but no one's too old to grab a Scooby Snack or two this **October.**



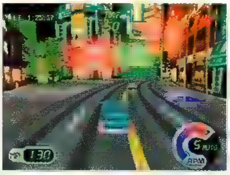

SOUNDS LIKE A MYSTERY TO ME. WE NEED TO GET INSIDE THAT MUSEUM!

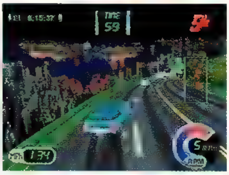


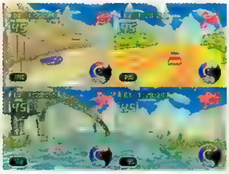


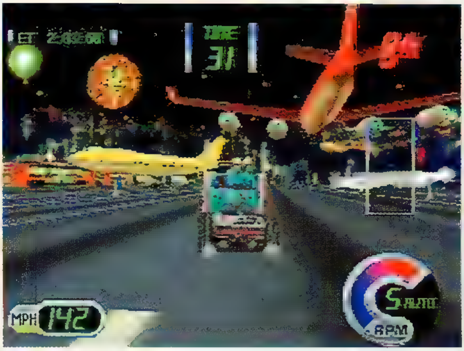
Cruis'n Exotica

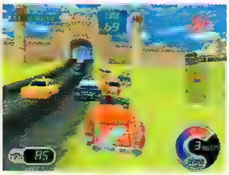
Looks like Cruis'n Exotica has come a long way since our last update. We're still waiting to play it but we can give you the stats: 30 vehicles (12 default and 18 secret), plus 12 courses including Korea, Vegas, Hong Kong and even Atlantis. The bottom line? As the sequel to Cruis'n USA and World, you know what to expect: lighthearted arcade-inspired gameplay. **Midway** will release the game this **October.**

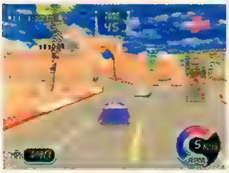


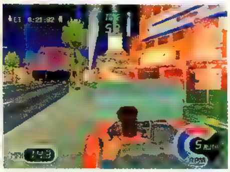


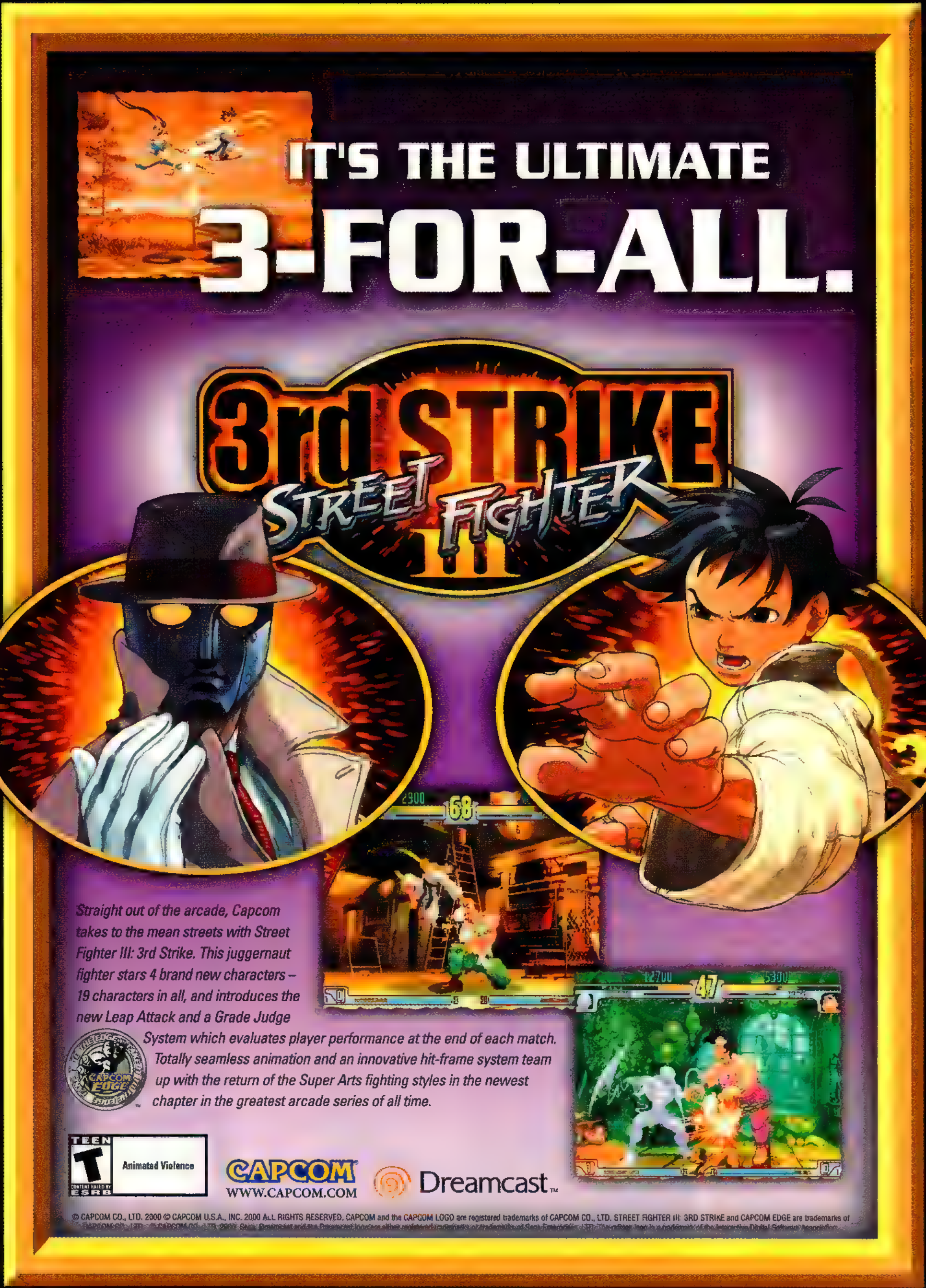











IT'S THE ULTIMATE
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3rd STRIKE
STREET FIGHTER III
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12700
47
5300
TEEN
T
Animated Violence
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
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Straight out of the arcade, Capcom takes to the mean streets with Street Fighter III: 3rd Strike. This juggernaut fighter stars 4 brand new characters – 19 characters in all, and introduces the new Leap Attack and a Grade Judge System which evaluates player performance at the end of each match. Totally seamless animation and an innovative hit-frame system team up with the return of the Super Arts fighting styles in the newest chapter in the greatest arcade series of all time.

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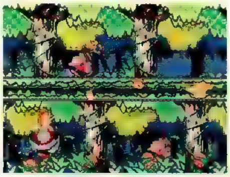
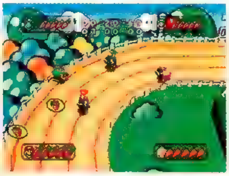
SUPER FIGHTING ROBOTS

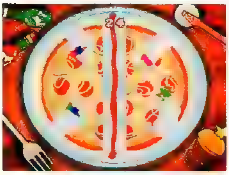
Battlebots has arrived on Comedy Central (check your local listings). Why do we bring that up? It's got robots that have been constructed and customized by tech-heads that duke it out on the battlefield—just like Custom Robo!

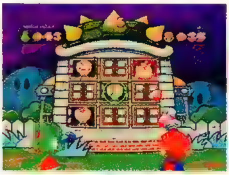
Mario Party 3

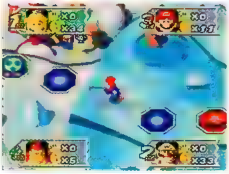
Hudson and Nintendo have teamed up once again for a third Mario Party game, coming to **Japan in December**, this time with 10 map boards and 70 all-new mini-games. Twenty items and "Action Events" on the main map (that require button tapping) have been added to the Battle Royale mode and a dual map feature gives you the option of bringing along a helper in the single-player game. Sweet!

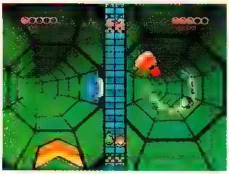


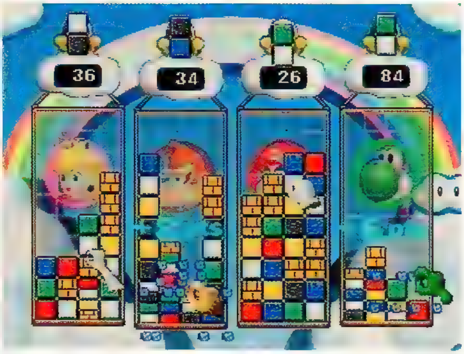






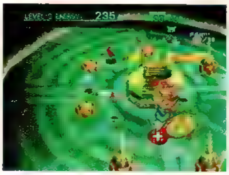


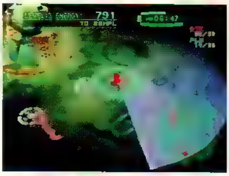


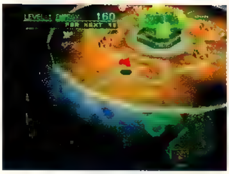


Echo Delta

Bored with Command and Conquer? Played Starcraft to death? Well here's a new real-time strategy for your N64: You have 18 minutes in each level to repair a sunken ship and raise it from the bottom of the ocean. Avoid the bad guys and mine resources you can use to upgrade your sub, beef up the guns on remote defensive stations, or fix parts of the derelict craft to finish the level. We had a chance to play this one at Space World and although the visuals were simplistic, we were quickly hooked. **Nintendo's** press materials note that Echo Delta is a "deep" game—get it? Deep? 'Cause it's, like, in the ocean and stuff? Yes, well anyway, Echo Delta is due out **December in Japan**; no U.S. release has been announced, but Nintendo is desperate for quality N64 games, so hopefully they will bring this one over.

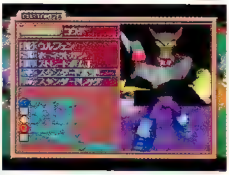


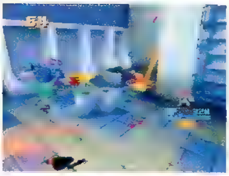


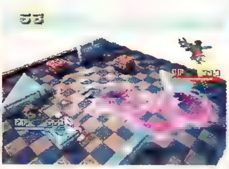


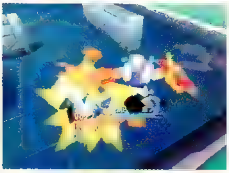
Custom Robo V2

Marigul's Noise Team gives Japan a sequel to last year's robot buildin' and fightin' game this **November in Japan**. Years have passed since the events that took place in the first game, and new rivals, arenas and robo-parts are available as you build and customize your own fighting robot. One of the more interesting additions is a new two-on-two tag battle mode for the Virtua On-esque combat segments.









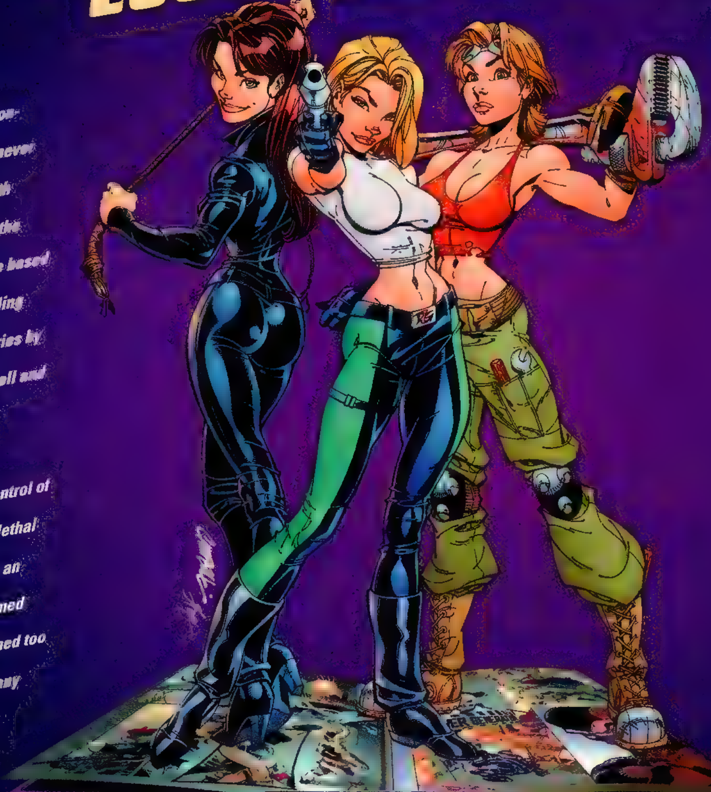
PlayStation

Danger Never Looked So Good!

COLLECTORS ITEM!
Manual features exclusive character sketches, bios and artwork from the creators!

3rd person action-adventure has never been sexier with DANGER GIRL, the only videogame based on the best-selling comic book series by J. Scott Campbell and Andy Hartnell.

Dare to take control of 3 beautiful yet lethal Danger Girls in an espionage-themed thrill-ride deemed too dangerous for any man to handle!



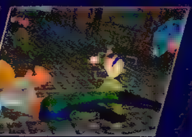
Varied modes of play: stealth, sniper and more

Dozens of weapons (whips–need we say more?)

PlayStation
Danger Girl
TEEN
THQ

FINDERS KEEPERS

Original art by the creators



Classic Danger Girl signature moves

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Animated Violence
Animated Blood
Suggestive Themes

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THQ
www.thq.com

BANJO-TOOIE™

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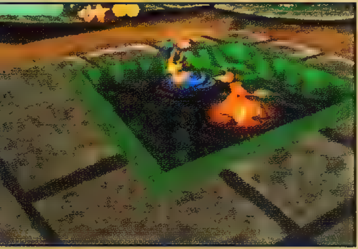

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ONLY FOR

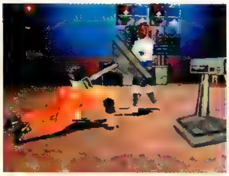
For cool stuff go to
www.banjo-tooie.com

Sometimes you need

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB
REST
ROOMS
to split up to get the job done.

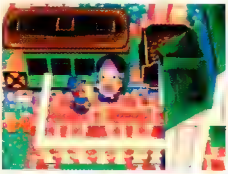
WCW Backstage Assault

After the semi-success of last year's WCW Mayhem, **Electronic Arts** decided to focus on the most interesting aspect of that game—the backstage brawling. This time around you'll find 50 various WCW characters fighting it out (women included), using a possible 40 weapons in various arenas spread out over three different rooms. WCW Backstage Assault lands in stores this **fall.**



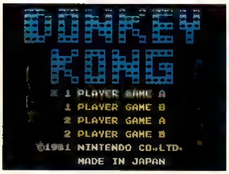
Animal Forest

In **Nintendo's** Animal Forest (scheduled for a **February** release), you take up residence and go through daily life in a virtual forest. Time and seasons pass as you play using a real-time, in-game clock. Buy a house (and furnishings), clothes, and get games that you can play (like Donkey Kong, shown below) on a virtual NES system! Save and exchange data with friends to visit and talk to animals in other towns.



ピーチク

わたしは
ピーチクともうします。
よかったら　おともだちに
なってくださらないですか？

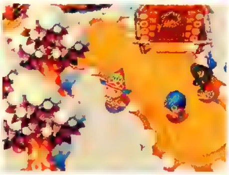


DONKEY
KONG

＊ 1 PLAYER GAME A
1 PLAYER GAME B
2 PLAYER GAME A
2 PLAYER GAME B
©1981 NINTENDO CO.,LTD.
MADE IN JAPAN

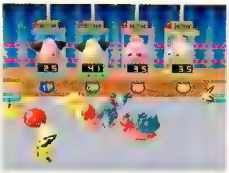
たぬきち

それじゃ、かぐの　はいたつを
おねがいするんだも。



Pokémon Stadium
Gold Silver & Crystal

Of course **Nintendo's** next Stadium game (due **December in Japan**) works with all three of the Pokémon Game Boy sequels—Gold, Silver and the just-announced Crystal (see Game Boy previews for more info)—but it also includes new mini-games and a few other little extras.



DEATH IS HERE! RENT IT NOW!

"SMART AND SCARY AS HELL"
– LAUNCH Radio Networks

"...TERRIFYINGLY REAL..."
– Los Angeles Times

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ALI LARTER
KERR SMITH
FINAL DESTINATION
DEATH DOESN'T TAKE NO FOR AN ANSW
NEW LINE PLATINUM SERIES
DEVON SAWA
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DVD
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NEW LINE CINEMA presents a ZIDE/PERRY production "FINAL DESTINATION" DEVON SAWA ALI LARTER KERR SMITH and TONY TODD JOHN PAPSIDERA, C.S.A. SHIRLEY WALKER JAMES COBLENTZ JOHN WILLETT ROBERT McLACHLAN, C.S.C. ART SCHAEFER BRIAN WITTEN RICHARD BRENER WARREN ZIDE CRAIG PERRY GLEN MORGAN JEFFREY REDDICK GLEN MORGAN & JAMES WONG and JEFFREY REDDICK JAMES WONG

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050.10
SCORE
PLAYER LIFE
LIFE 30/30
LIFE 5/5

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PlayStation.2 Dreamcast

MATURE M Animated Violence Animated Blood

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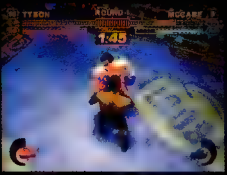
KONAMI®

TYSON
ROUND
MYNALDA
1:50

Fight Mike, or as Mike!
Take on the champ and a ton of bad-ass opponents on your way to the title shot. Or, be Tyson, and feel what it's like to knock the world senseless.

TYSON
ROUND 1
1:21

It's real! It's fierce!
The incredible realism includes sound effects, blood, facial damage, sweat—and individual recovery rates that can turn any bruising hero into a zero.



We've got a system!
Two unique features include a score bar that accurately simulates a real points system, and even a reward system for outstanding defensive play.

TYSON
ROUND 1
MYNALDA

Plastic surgery—with fists!
Train with sparring partners in an authentic gym—then let it fly prime time with jabs, body blows, weaves, punches, blocks and knee-buckling uppercuts.

* * NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. Void in Florida and where prohibited. You must be 13 or older and a US resident to enter. Sweepstakes ends December 31, 2000. See www.codemasters.com for complete rules.

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TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

Animated Violence

PlayStation

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GENIUS AT PLAY

Enter to win a pair of Everlast boxing gloves autographed by Mike Tyson!
Enter to win on www.codemasters.com at the Mike Tyson Boxing site!**

TYSON
ROUND 1
MUTAMBA
1:28

TYSON
ROUND 1
1:37
5

Make 'em eat canvas!
You can power up a punch to increase damage—or nail your opponent's sweet spot, then watch him go 'nightie-night' as the lights go out on his lame career.

Take on the world!
Three modes of play include Showcase, Versus (winner keeps going), and World, where you train and manage your fighter up the ranks to undisputed champ.

MIKE TYSON BOXING

42 KNOCKOUTS.* YOU'RE NEXT.

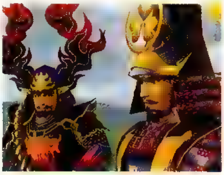
*And counting...

Kessen

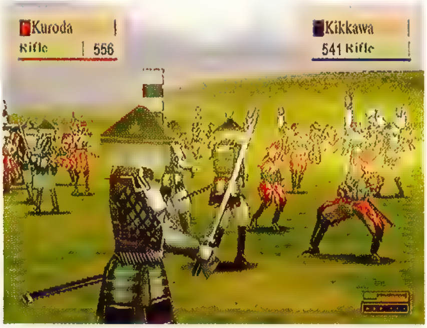
KEEPIN' IT REAL

Kessen (which means "strategic battle") is based on real, historical Japanese warlords and events. How accurate is it? Take a virtual tour of Japan during the Edo period in which Kessen is set at http://www.us-japan.org/edomatsu and find out!

Publisher:	Electronic Arts
Developer:	Koei
Players:	1
Genre:	Strategy
% Done:	75%
Release:	Fall
Also Try:	Romance of the Three Kingdoms VI (PS)
Web Address:	www.ea.com www.koeigames.com
The Good:	Beautiful cinematics.
The Bad:	PS2 controller surely not built for an RTS.
And The Ugly:	Camera is never where you want it.



"Does this thing make my head look fat?" One of Kessen's best features is the ornate style and attention to detail–even during battle sequences.

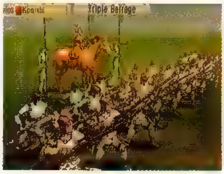


Every single one of these warriors is at your command! Not really. The unit control system avoids micromanagement nicely.

Any hardcore real-time strategy fan who has played the console versions of such staples as Command & Conquer and Starcraft has probably sworn off using anything other than a hot-keyed interface on a PC for their strategy gaming. Times they are a-changin' though, and as consoles become more versatile, so might gamers. Koei is once again integrating the RTS into the console world, this time on the PS2, and the product is actually quite impressive. With a heavy emphasis on strategy and battle tactics, Kessen looks and feels like a very no-nonsense title that will probably appeal more to the military enthusiast than Blizzard or Westwood fans.

The player controls several battalions of varying size, each headed by an identifying general, under the Tokugawa Shogunate. A well-designed tutorial introduces several of the game's functions, which include selecting and customizing generals, issuing orders to individual units or blanket commands to the whole army, developing battle strategy, and performing special maneuvers. The battle system works something like a real-time Military Madness. Units have relative strengths or weaknesses against each other (riflemen are strong against cavalry, for example), and once a command is given, the game cuts to a cinematic showing the executed order and its effect on the field or opponent. During the action, the player can view engagements from above or focus in on individual units hacking it out. Realistic battle noises and ambient sounds accent the detailed characters and their environments. Between skirmishes, tons of CG movies show off the gorgeous artwork and the hardware's proficiency at bringing it to life. Troops will react in different ways to orders and battle outcomes, so commands need to be planned rather carefully—generals will protest or even refuse an unwise order. Moreover, the morale of each detachment is influenced by every action and tracked with a zeal meter, which allows the troops to perform special attacks on the field.

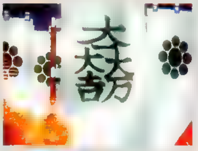
Players can expect an absolutely seamless experience from Kessen, but does it have what it takes to win the PC strategist over to the console side? Barring some possible interface gripes, it's tough to see how even the finicky RTS crowd could find a problem in a game with so much visual appeal and immersive action.



The Western army is an equal-opportunity employer. Check out the detail on this triple line of gunnin' girls!

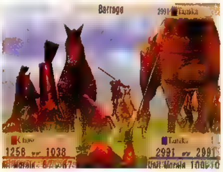
POLITICS

Battle Lines



It wouldn't be a war without some underhanded politics! Although Kessen focuses on a bitter conflict between the Eastern and Western armies of Japan, the thin line between the two can be blurred prior to battle for an extra advantage. Each side is allowed to confer with the opposing army's generals before battle begins. They can be asked to either jump sides or bide their time and choose an ally once the tides of battle are evident. Each general has a bias rating that shows his loyalty to either side and determines which way he is most likely to swing. If you're confident in your battle abilities, a few extra thousand troops might just hop onto your wagon...or try to burn it if you're losing!

Honda: Kato has challenged me to a Duel!



PlayStation®2

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STREET RACING

You know the rules,
there are no rules.

RELEASE DATE: PLAYSTATION 2 LAUNCH

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Race across two accurately modeled cities - New York and London!

Win the pink slips of opposing players! Rise up through the ranks in the illicit world of the Midnight Club.

Play in a persistent world with interactive traffic, pedestrians and law enforcement.

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new music
improved rendering
personal stat management
battle
TECMO
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8 6 0 5 4 9
over option
HARD CO
multi-tiered levels
user
DEAD or ALIVE
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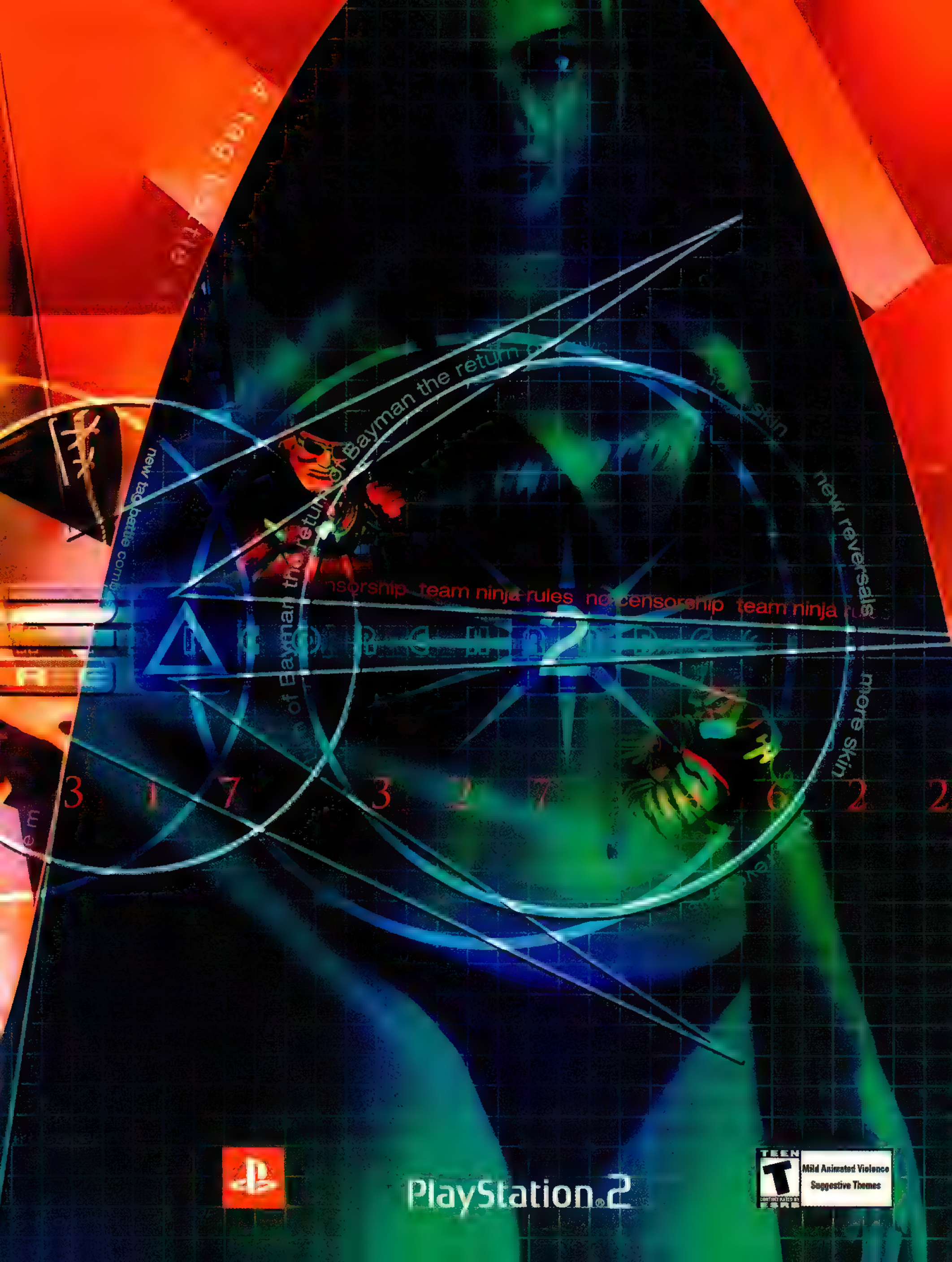
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new skin
new reversals
more skin
new tag battle combos
no censorship team ninja rules no censorship team ninja rules
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PlayStation 2
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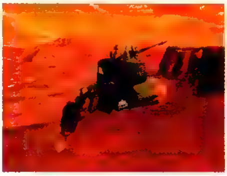
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Mild Animated Violence
Suggestive Themes

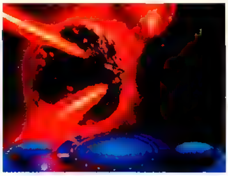
SHIPS TO SCALE

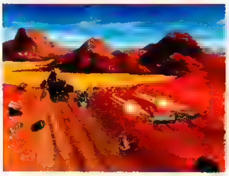
Just to give you an idea how big the droid control ship is at the end of Starfighter, picture this: The droid lander craft is so big your ship looks like a speck next to it in comparison (it's easily a hundred times larger), and the control ship can fit 30 to 40 of these inside it! That's crazy huge!

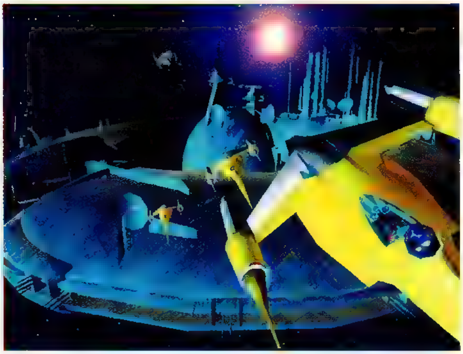
Starfighter

PlayStation 2 games are expected to look incredible, but really now, **LucasArts** is almost going too far with their first release for Sony's new machine (due this **fall**). We had the chance to spend some time with Starfighter, and are happy to report that not only are the controls feeling good, the gameplay is perhaps the most exciting part of the title. Unlike many shooting games, where it's you against everybody else, Starfighter is designed to give you the feeling that you're only a small part of the ongoing battle—an impressive effect made possible by having dozens of other crafts realistically fighting each other while you fly over, below or into(!) them. "There's a battle already going on," is how Daron Stinnett, the project leader for Starfighter explains it. "You're only there to turn the tide."





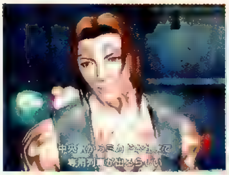




The Bouncer

Square EA just sent us these screens from The Bouncer and they look fantastic! Having incorporated at least two modes, story and versus, **Dream Factory** promises 20+ hours of gameplay on the former if you want to acquire all of the characters and moves (and you will). Multiplayer capability will also be included for the versus matches. Based on what we've seen from the PS2 and its ability to smoothly handle multiple characters on-screen at once, it's pretty exciting to see what Square might cook up for some of the fights in this game. The three main characters will each have easy-to-perform special moves and will also respond to the analog sticks for greater control. Square EA has set a **Winter** release for The Bouncer, so keep your eyes glued to *EGM* for updates on a playable version in the next couple months.

KOU
VOLT
SION



SION
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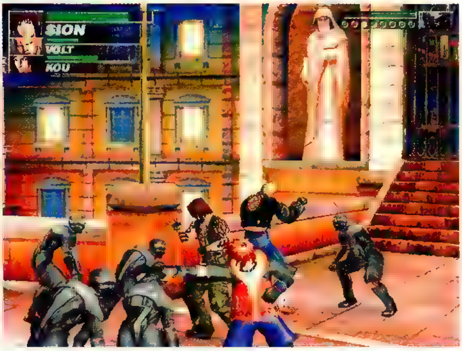
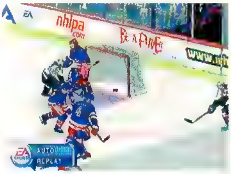
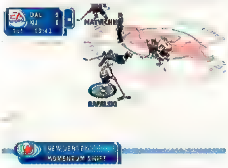
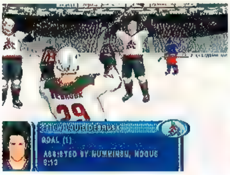


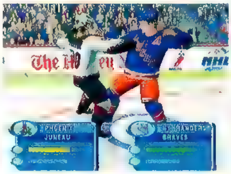
NHL 2001

As it nears completion we can tell you that **EA's** newest hockey game is absolutely breathtaking. This game comes so close to re-creating the feel of a hockey match, it's scary. The animations are amazing—players rub their jaws after a fistfight and grimace during hard hits. Fast gameplay didn't take a backseat to the graphics either—it's deep as ever, with season, draft and shootout modes, in addition to selectable uniforms and tons of stats. This is gonna rock come **November.**



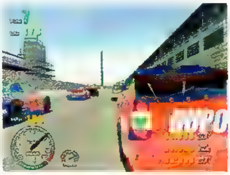


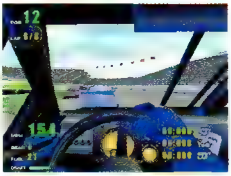


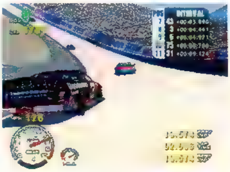


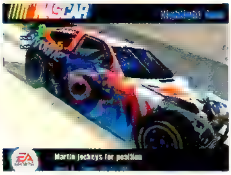
NASCAR 2001

We finally spent some quality time behind the wheel of the first PS2 NASCAR game, and we're happy to say it definitely feels more solid than its PS counterpart. Whether it's drafting down the long straights of a super-speedway or beating and banging through the turns of a half-mile bullring, **EA Sports** is definitely on the right track (no pun intended) so far. Once they smooth out the framerate, the game should be just about right. This **fall** release should get racing fans off the fence and in the stores to buy a PS2.



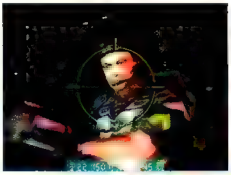


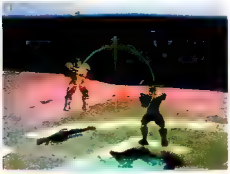


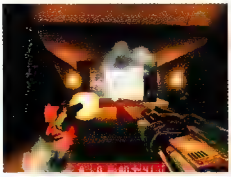


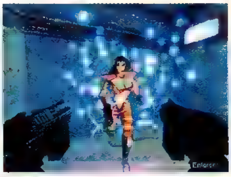
Unreal Tournament

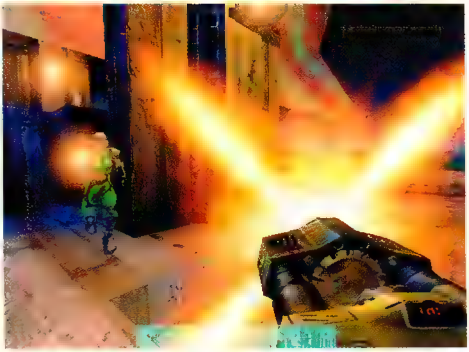
Shown in super-choppy form at this year's E3, we're glad to see that Unreal Tournament has come a long way since then. While not quite running at 60fps, the game plays much smoother than before, even in four-player split-screen (which is good since there's no Internet multiplayer mode). Textures are a little soft, but only the anal-retentive will really notice. **Infogrames** is planning UT for this **fall.**

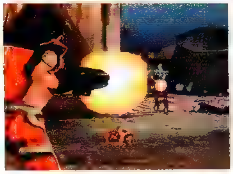


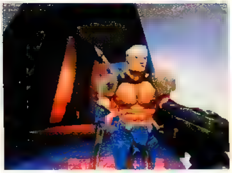










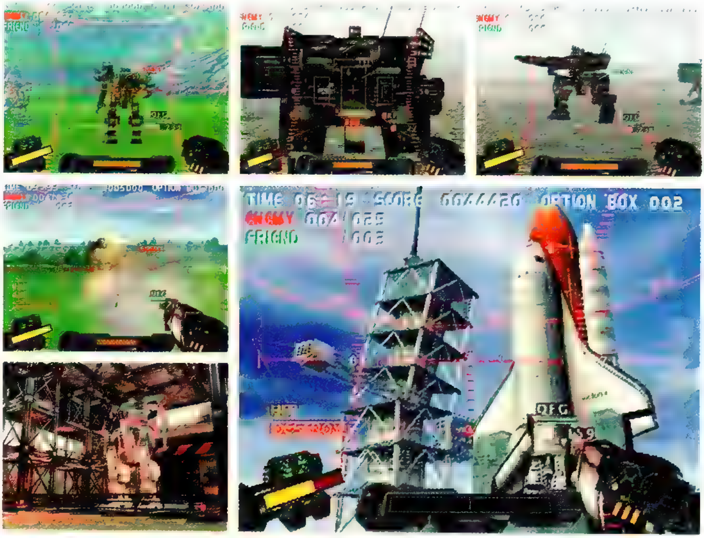


YOU SPAZ!

Since we last covered them, Working Designs has announced that U.S. gamers will get English versions of both Gungriffon Blaze and Silpheed on Oct. 26! Look for them under the Spaz label.

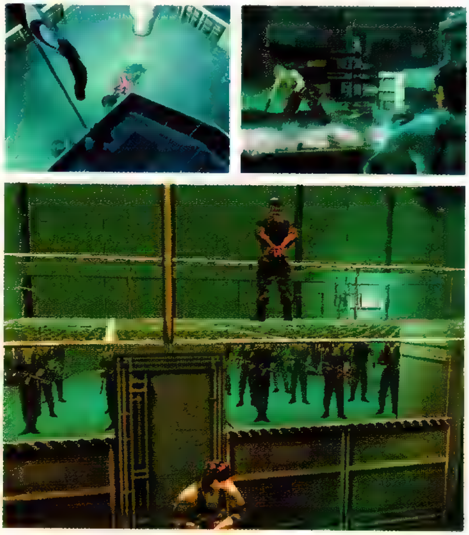
Gungriffon Blaze

Looks like **Working Designs** made a good choice, picking up **LucasArts**' Gungriffon Blaze for the PS2. It's so much more than just a mech-based shoot-'em-up. Not only can you create a pilot and adjust his/her stats (right down to weight and IQ), but you get to customize your weapons before each outing. The missions all take place in vastly different landscapes, from the desert to snow-capped mountains, and nothing is safe. Not only can you destroy your enemies, but just about any structure you see as well. When the PlayStation 2 launches on **Oct. 26**, Gungriffon Blaze is definitely a game to check out. A note to owners of the first game: You're gonna absolutely love this one.



Metal Gear Solid 2

Ever since the unveiling of MGS2 at E3 this year, gamers have been begging **Konami** for a new look at the game. At the recent ECTS in London, Konami came through with more. The new MGS2 trailer opens with a hooded man, cigarette in mouth, walking across a suspended bridge at night. Cars race by, illuminating the man's face—it's Snake. All of the sudden he rips off his jacket, breaks into a run and disappears (in the same semi-transparent way the stealth camouflage suits worked in the last game). Then he jumps off of the bridge in dramatic John Woo slow-motion style and tumbles toward the water. But you quickly see that it's not the water he's headed for, it's a large ship. And he's not freefalling, he's attached to a bungie cord. The whole sequence is very reminiscent of the stylings of the Japanese anime Ghost in the Shell. The new trailer continued to show more of Snake on the ship. Enjoy these new shots, and look for updates on every piece of new info we can scrape together on this game in the coming months.



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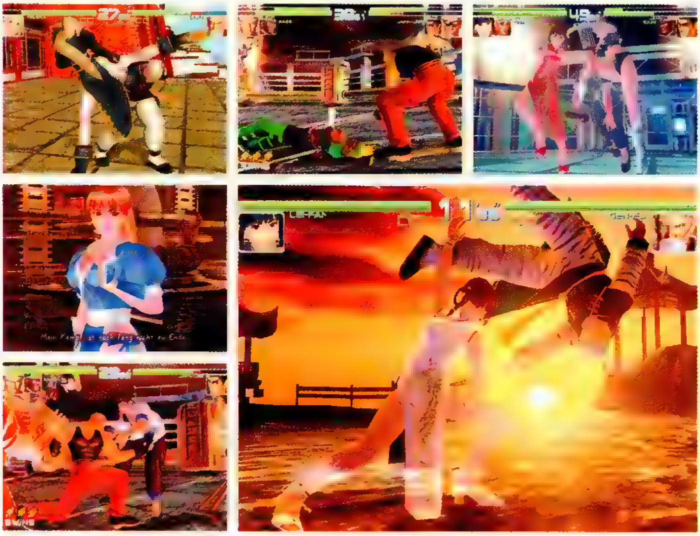
DEAD OR ALIVE

Dead or Alive is not only a game filled with busty ladies defying the laws of gravity. It's also the name of a cross-dressing band from the '80s who thrive on the retro circuit to this day. Spin me 'round like a record, 'round, 'round, like a record at http://www.deadoralive.net

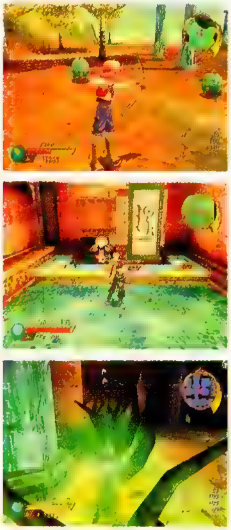
Dead or Alive 2: Hardcore

Leave it up to **Tecmo** to fashion four different versions of the same game. In the case of Dead or Alive 2: Hardcore it seems as if American PS2 audiences will get the best of the bunch. While it won't feature Acclaim's Shadowman (as the Japanese DC version will), DOA2: Hardcore will include all-new arenas, special combination moves no matter which two characters you pick, multiple tag-battle arenas, loads of secret costumes, and the return of Bayman. Kind of a surprise, since Leon is essentially a carbon copy of the red-hatted marine, but oh, well. Tecmo's **Team Ninja** has high hopes for DOA2: Hardcore when it arrives in time for the PS2 launch in **October.** Maybe Tekken Tag Tournament won't be the only superb 3D fighter on the PS2 this fall.



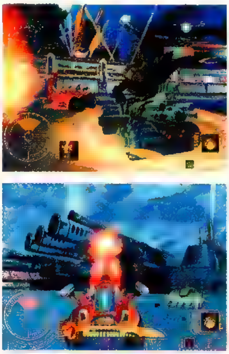
Evergrace

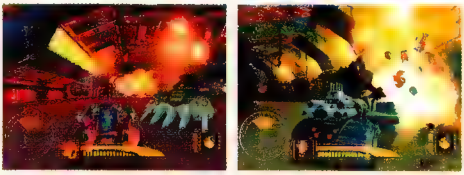
From PlayStation 1 pipe dream to PS2 reality, **Agetec's** Evergrace is just around the corner from landing in the U.S. this **fall.** Evergrace feels like a traditional RPG in many respects, but exhibits some nice little novelties that skew it toward an action game as well. Crystals that let you snap between the two characters, shop for items, and save all in one are scattered about the landscape. The real-time battle system is based on frequent encounters with respawning enemies, and attack strength is affected by the player's physical condition, which goes down every time you attack or run. After giving an early English version of Evergrace a test run, we're a little concerned. The voice acting is barely adequate thus far, while the text itself is merely functional. Hopefully Agetec puts some final tweaks in before release.



Motor Mayhem!

Developed by **Beyond Games** and published by **Infogrames,** Motor Mayhem! is the first in a series of games designed to showcase the VCL (Vehicle Combat League). Featuring a rich, WWF-like backstory, nine different vehicles, eight unique fully destructible arenas, Championship, Endurance, Last Man Standing, Quick Start and split-screen modes, Motor Mayhem! has an immersive quality that gives it more character than Twisted Metal or Vigilante 8. Expect it to arrive sometime this **winter.**



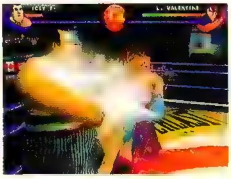
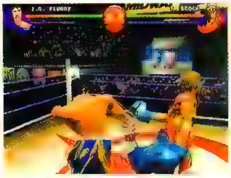
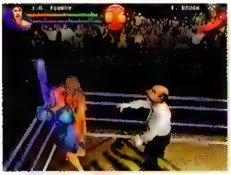
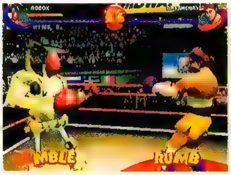
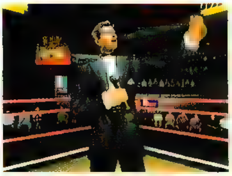
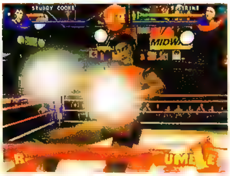


READY 2 DEFINE

Think you're pretty good in the virtual ring? During the 1940s, boxer Hal Bagwell went 180 fights without a loss. That's some streak, even by today's standards. Hal Bagwell's Punch Out? It could happen...

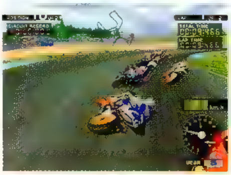
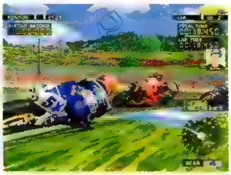
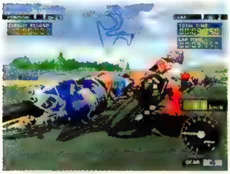
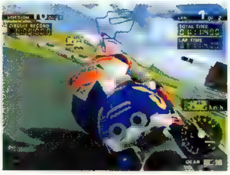
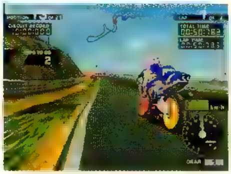
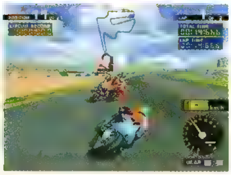
Ready 2 Rumble Round 2

Midway is bringing its own version of a Rumble Pak to the PS2. The sequel to their '99 DC title is still in development, but looks like it will retain most of the original cast and add close to 10 new faces to the four playable modes. A more advanced version of the "RUMBLE" power-up and finishing-move style knock-outs have also made their way into the game. Expect to throw down on this one right **around PS2 launch**.

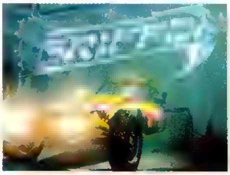
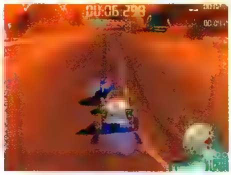
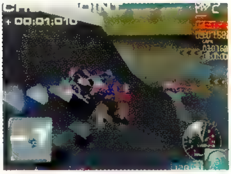
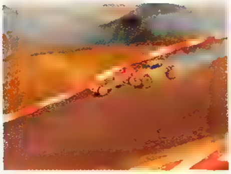
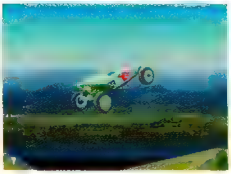
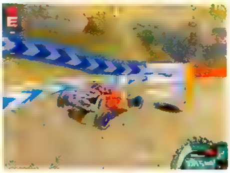
Moto GP

We just got our hands on a playable copy of this impressive-looking title. So how does it handle, you ask? It's a cross between EA's Moto Racer 2 and Sega's Manx TT. You can lean into the corners until your bike is just inches from the pavement. The analog stick is very sensitive so it takes restraint to avoid plunging from side to side—definitely more sim than arcade. Look for **Namco's** Moto GP this **November**.

Wild Wild Racing

As you could probably guess from the title, WWR features lots of fast-paced racing through crazy obstacle-laden environments. After about a year of development at U.K.-based **Rage Software**, the game seems to be coming together nicely. Everything moves really quickly and the cars sport some great physics (when you hit a jump or obstacle, your car reacts accordingly). **Interplay** plans to have the game out **at launch**.

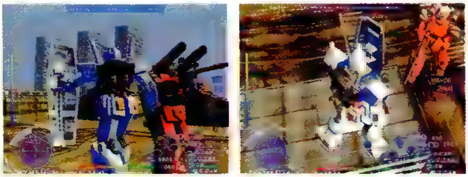







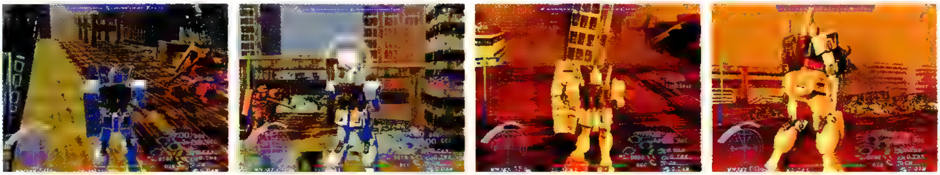
GUN DAM GREAT!

New to the Gundam series or just can't get enough of it? Catch the awesome Gundam Wing cartoon on Cartoon Network weekdays at 4:30 and 11:00 p.m. Don't have cable? Go see a friend who does.

Mobile Suit Gundam

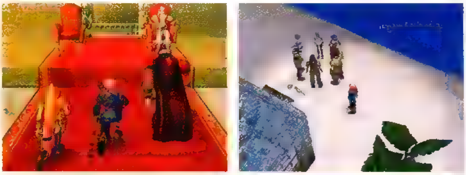
While still early in development and lacking a final title, **Bandai's** first entry into the PS2 market will be a 3D action game with a third-person perspective. Players will be able to train and control their own units using mechs from the Universal Century Gundam series. Also, these mechs will learn new strategies on their own the more you fight. Bandai proposes furious multi-mech battles. Look for it in **early 2001**.

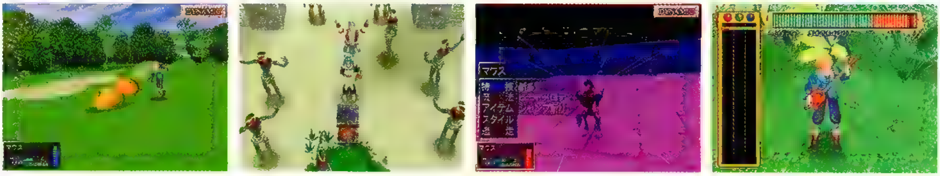




Reiselied Ephemeral Fantasia

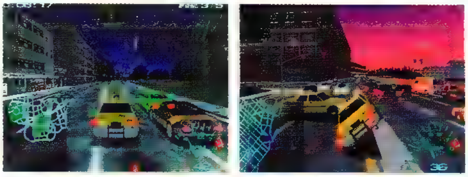
Merging the RPG with musical performance, **Konami's** Reiselied is not yet confirmed for the U.S. but was shown at E3 as Ephemeral Fantasia. As a musician hired to perform on a magical island, our hero faces a variety of tasks (including Guitar Freaks-style mini-games) to unmask its hidden secrets. The major drawback: It's pretty darn ugly for a PS2 game, or even a PS game for that matter. Reiselied is out **now in Japan**.

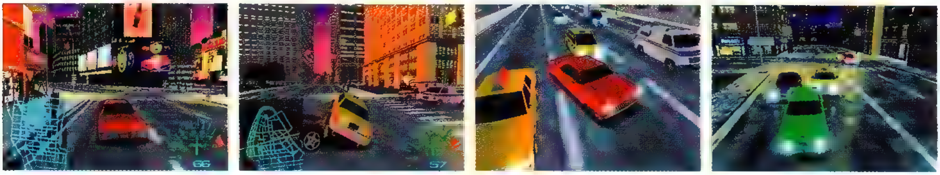




Midnight Club

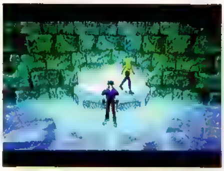
Here's one last look at Midnight Club before it comes out during the **PS2 launch window**. **Rockstar** is big on the huge, go-anywhere driving sims this year, so MC is much like Smuggler's Run in that you have set goals in each level or race, but can pretty much accomplish them however you like. We've only seen New York and London so far, but they both feel authentic in look and layout.

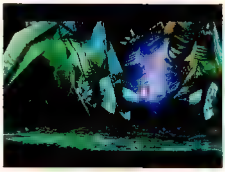


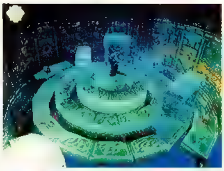


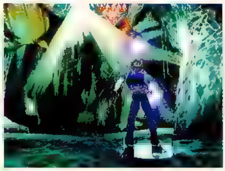
Orphen

The rumors are true: **Activision** is officially bringing **Kodokawa Shoten's** Orphen to the PS2 in America. This dark platformer promises some great gameplay elements, including both on-the-fly enemy encounters and staged battles using all party members. During these scripted battles, the player can target any one of several attacking monsters and unleash magical, elemental or physical attacks in real time. The result is a fast and furious combat system without the artificiality of Final Fantasy-type recharge periods. The game further boasts tons of phenomenal lighting effects and textures, over 100 enemies and bosses, several playable allies with unique abilities, and dozens of interspersed cutscenes to introduce new characters and plot twists. It's due out here this **spring**, but we'll be importing this one.



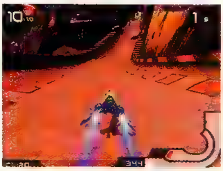


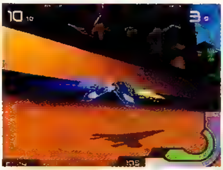


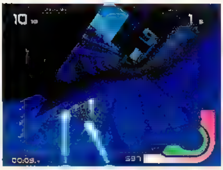


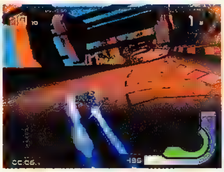
Wipeout Fusion

We still haven't gotten a playable of this early **2001 release**, but lucky for us **Studio Liverpool** has been generous with the shots. The game is being rebuilt from the ground up to properly exploit the power of the PS2. Major changes include new track designs (much wider and dynamic), customizable ships and revamped AI. Twenty one levels incorporate corkscrew turns, tremendous banked curves and other previously unseen elements. In accordance, the ships will be able to defy gravity like never before. An upgrade system works in conjunction with points earned for winning races. You'll be able to totally alter the way your craft looks and performs. The game looks terrific so far; hopefully they won't have to sacrifice any of the graphic splendor for a speedy framerate.









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The Threat Returns

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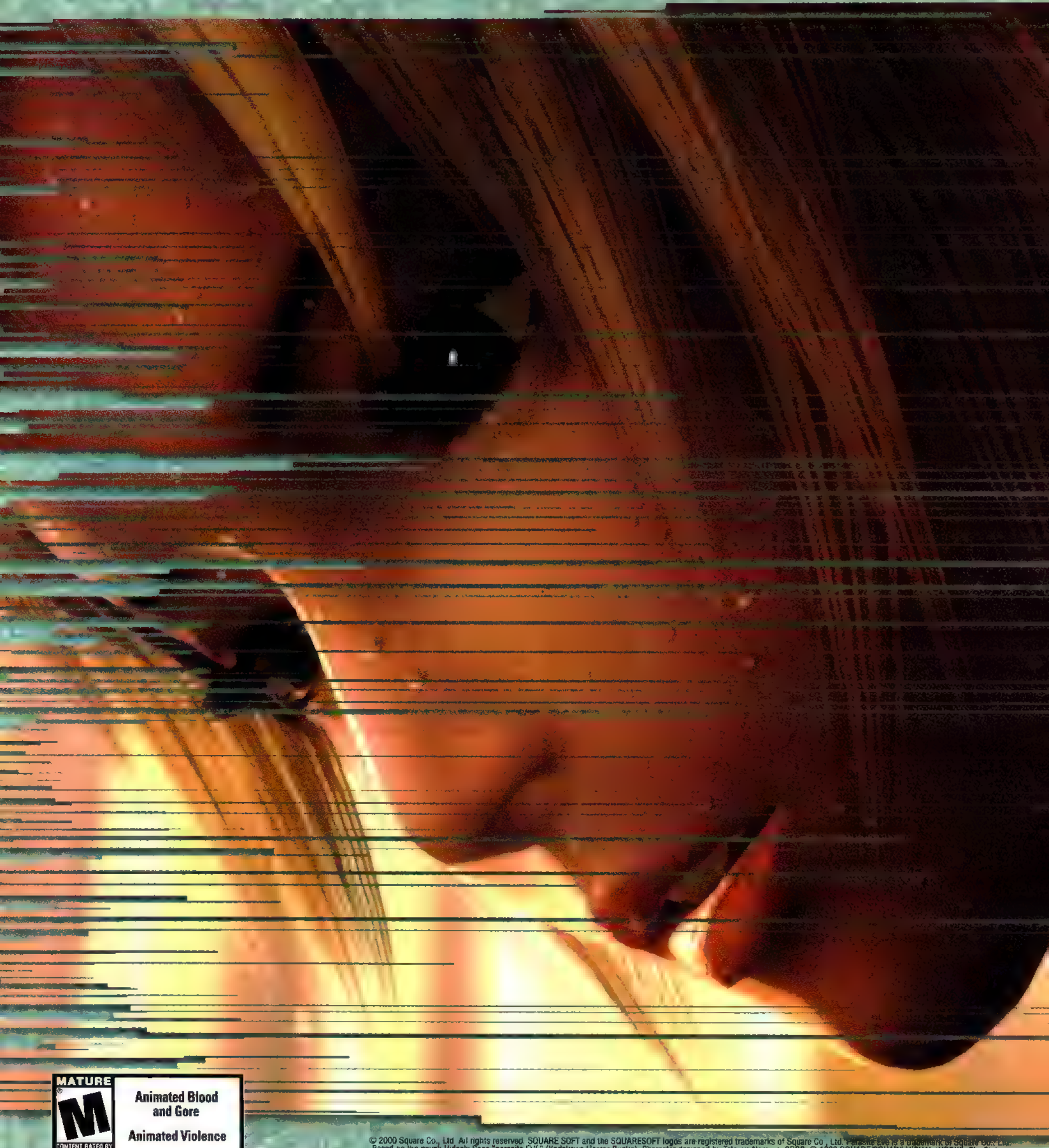

MATURE
M
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Animated Blood and Gore
Animated Violence

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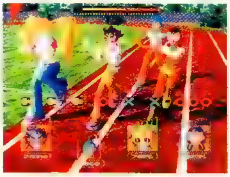
Buchigire Kongou

Finally! The long wait for a construction equipment fighting game is over! Choose a character and a vehicle (forklift, bulldozer, steamroller, etc.), then mash one of three buttons to attack left, right, or straight ahead. Yes it plays like crap and yes, it's very weird. Then again, compared to other **Artdink** games (Tail of the Sun, Aquanaut's Holiday), this one is downright mainstream. Out now in Japan, and **never** coming here.

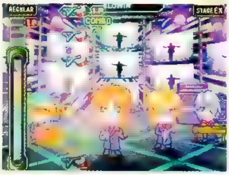
Dance Summit 2001

This **fall, Enix/Metro** bring the third game in the Bust A Move (or Groove, depending whether you're in the U.S. or Japan) series to PS2. Four-on-four battles replace the one-on-one's from the first two games (though you can break into solo dances). Choose from three groups of all-new characters, each masters of one style. The goal is to become a part of the Dance Summit, the biggest dance party ever.



Rock'n Megastage

A wide selection of Japanese pop tunes can't save **Jaleco's** Rock'n Megastage (**now available** in Japan) from the pitfalls of its interface—not to mention that the graphics are much like PS1. Perhaps it's just too hard to tear away from the tried-and-true interface of Konami's Bemani series, but following the instrument icons that slowly fade-in is a pain. It comes with a special arcade foot controller for the drum sections.

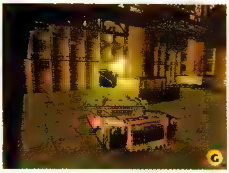


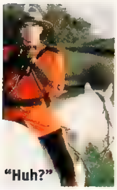
STORY
STAGE 4

NORMAL
STAGE 1

WDL: Thunder Tanks

The latest in the Battletanx series is coming to the PS2 this **fall** from **3DO**. It features 11 armored vehicles with their own style and special attacks, nine modes of play and multiplayer support for up to four. Players will deal with weather and terrain effects over a dozen realistic battle arenas, and the processing prowess of the PS2 makes it all happen at 60 frames per second.



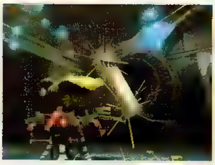


ODDER WORLD

While Oddworld is pretty unique, it's still just a video game. If you want some insight to a truly odd world, you need to go to Canada. Those funny guys just don't make much sense. Check out this link to see what we mean.
http://www.yorku.ca/twainweb/troberts/raising.html

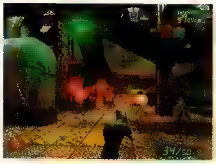
Oddworld: Munch's Oddysee

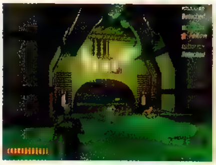
Making the leap from 2D to 3D is never easy, but Oddworld Inhabitants is doing it in style with an "idiot-friendly" camera system, new Gamespeak technology, innovative new gameplay mechanics introduced by mono-ped Munch, and some quality time with old pal Abe. **Infogrames** will ship Munch's Oddysee **Q2, 2001**.

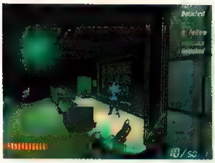


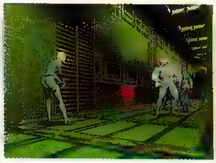
X-Squad

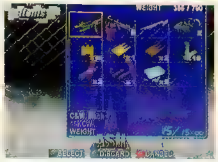
In **Electronic Arts'** "Delta Force for Dummies" you take control of a commando team that looks like it was yanked out of an anime cartoon. While there is the potential for some interesting puzzles to be solved by teamwork, but really you usually just use the four heroes to open doors by hitting big buttons. You control silver-spike-haired Ash who barks orders (stealth, assault, follow, stay, recon) and cheesy "buddy-talk" lines ("Game, set, match!") to the rest of his team: Maya, the standard-issue leather-clad vixen; Ving Rhames knockoff Judd; and Melinda, a roughhouse blonde. Each character can upgrade their weapons, armor and other killing essentials when they score bonus points within the level by having a steady aim. Once you have them all powered up, it's as explosive as a Chuck Norris B-movie flick. Get your guns loaded for X-Squad in **October**.

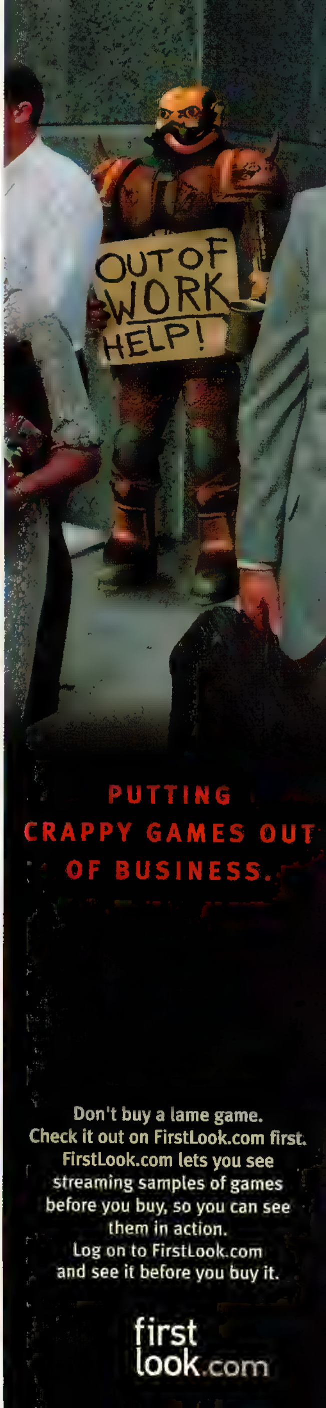












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ACTION BASS

PlayStation
NTSC U/C
EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
SLUS-01248
ACTION BASS

0'10"
608g
BIG

After a hard day of fishing under the sun or competing in a tournament, you look with awe at the trophies your angling skills have awarded you. In this action-packed arcade style fishing game, the player can either spend time leisurely casting across lake waters waiting for a bite on the line or they can enter an intense fishing competition where the only fish that matters is the biggest catch of the day. Along the way players will face all sorts of challenges including shifting water conditions, unstable weather and even more skilled opponents as he continually attempts to outwit the wily bass during each season of the year. Amazingly realistic fish behavior ensures that no fish is caught without a fight and that reeling in a winner delivers optimum angling action excitement.

- Tournament-style Challenge Mode, free-wheeling Free Mode, and an Extra Bonus Mode.
- Lure Action Gauge allows the player to monitor lure movement easily.
- Enjoy watching fish (up to five heaviest) you brought back in the Aquarium Mode.
- Five diverse lures are available at the beginning, covering a wide range of water conditions and lure movements. More lures will be available as the player gains experience.
- Wide variety of "lure action" possible to attract bass, some requiring retrieving or rod movements only, others requiring skillful combination of the two.

$9.99* GOT GAME? $9.99*

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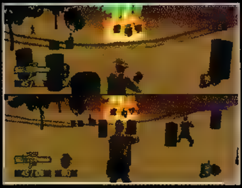
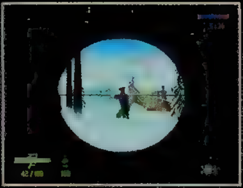
SPEC OPS:
STEALTH PATROL

PlayStation
NTSC U/C
SPEC OPS:
STEALTH PATROL
TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB
SLUS-01131





Welcome to the US Army Rangers, one of the toughest and most elite of the world's military task forces. Your main objective is to control your team of Rangers and eliminate opponent targets while completing mission sub-tasks in the time allotted. Choose between stealth or all out frontal assault- it's up to you. 3D action, time pressure and realistic combat will keep you begging for more.

Immersed in huge, outdoor 3D environments you and your team members must successfully execute your tasks which revolve around several different mission objectives including reprisal attacks, seize and destroy missions, counter-terrorist attacks and raid and destroy missions. Each environment is unique, not only in look and feel, but in game play as well. With the emphasis on action and realism, navigate your team with guns blazing or silently under the cover of darkness across landscapes of thick jungle, barren desert, arctic tundra and dense forest.

Do you have what it takes? Will you be able to complete your mission, though you may be the lone survivor?

- 5 intense mission campaigns each with numerous sub-missions based on real activities carried out by the US Army Rangers
- An arsenal to choose from including shotguns, grenades, machine guns, sniper rifles and more
- 3 difficulty levels - Private (Easy), Corporal (Medium), Sergeant (Difficult) offers massive replay value
- In the 2 Ranger option the player has simultaneous control of 2 Rangers
- Create an inventory filled with hi-tech equipment to aid the Rangers in their tasks - GPS navigation for moving through dense landscape, tripwire mines to booby trap enemies, nightvision goggles for stealth accuracy, med kits for injury repair and more

$9.99* GOT GAME? $9.99*

*Suggested Retail Price

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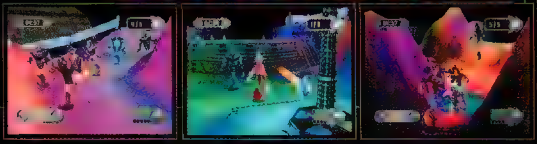
BALL BREAKERS

Roll with the punches! Roll over the competition!

PlayStation
BALL BREAKERS
E



SPIN JAM

Ultra-addictive arcade action puzzler!!!!!!!!!!

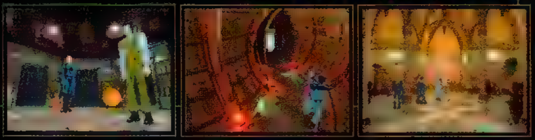
PlayStation
Spin Jam
PUZZLED? YOU WILL BE
E

SELECT PLAYERS
POPPY
GILLY

MARTIAN GOTHIC

Horror on an intergalactic scale!!

PlayStation
MARTIAN GOTHIC
T



SPEC OPS:
STEALTH PATROL

The enemy is expecting you tomorrow. You're already there!

PlayStation
SPEC OPS:
STEALTH PATROL
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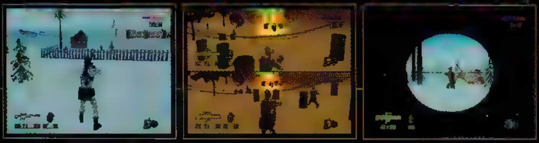

PRO-PINBALL
BIG RACE USA

Pro Pinball: Big Race USA delivers more adrenaline-pumping action than your brain can handle!

PlayStation
PRO-PINBALL
BIG RACE USA
E

MONEY SPINNER
500

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SPEEDBALL 2100

Extreme sports have been taken to the next Level!

GRUDGE WARRIORS

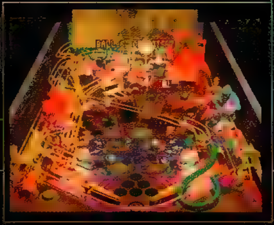
There is no such thing as friendly fire.

FORD RACING

Pulse pounding white knuckle action of ford racing is here!!

PRO-PINBALL
FANTASTIC JOURNEY

Steam powered time travel will whisk you away into the world of pinball.



* Suggested Retail Price=$9.99.

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PRODUCTS RANGE FROM EVERYONE TO TEEN
E-T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

PlayStation

$9.99* GOT GAME? $9.99*

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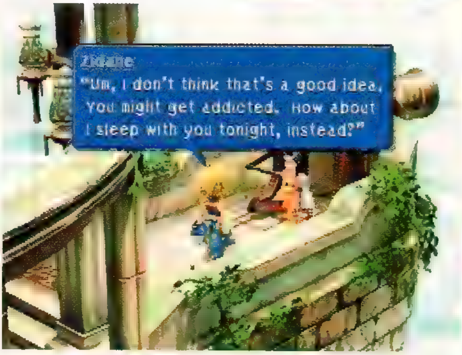
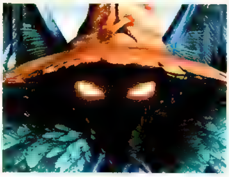
Final Fantasy IX

We just got the first English revision of Final Fantasy IX, and oh mama, we're impressed. **Squaresoft** knows a new standard was set with the U.S. release of Vagrant Story, and is not taking the translation of its flagship title lightly. The lighthearted vein that runs throughout the story has been retained without cheapening the overall experience. Look for a review next month!

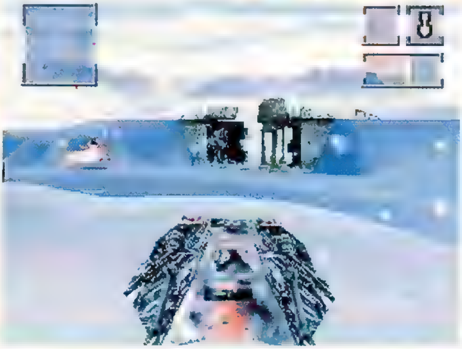


Zidane
"Um, I don't think that's a good idea. You might get addicted. How about I sleep with you tonight, instead?"



Star Wars: Demolition

Finally, an answer to the burning question, "If Boba Fett were stuck in the middle of the Battle of Hoth against a Rancor and a Battle Droid, who would win?" Demolition might not be the most serious title in **LucasArts'** holiday lineup, but it really isn't trying to be. Developed by **Luxoflux**, the folks behind Vigilante 8, this game keeps the same look and lighthearted feel as the popular vehicular combat series, but the classic cars and realistic locations have been replaced by AT-STs and familiar Star Wars settings. Get ready to use the Force (and some giant guns) this **fall**.



YOU BETTER WATCH OUT!
ONE MEAN INTERACTIVE GAME IS COMING THIS FALL.
THE GRINCH™
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Comic Mischief
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Race with what's under the hood.
Win with what's strapped on top.
Hybrid Extreme
RACING™

Customize your wheels for maximum firepower.

Transform through portals to battle by land, sea and air.

Blast your way through with all the hard-core weapons you find.

PlayStation

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

MATTEL INTERACTIVE

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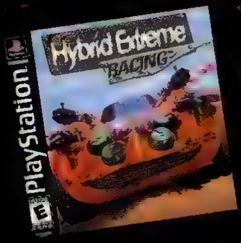
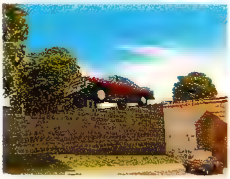
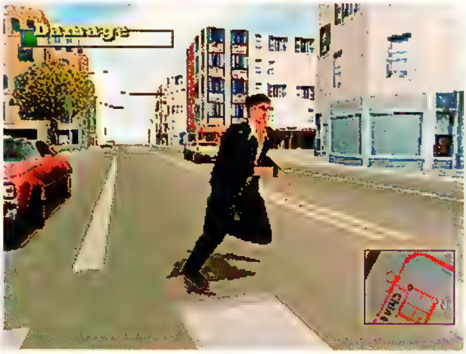


Take it to the Extreme! Modify then race one of eight customizable cars through some of the toughest tracks! Transform your vehicle to handle the terrain. But to win, you need fire power. Pick up machine guns and missile launchers to knock your opponents out! Because in this game, the best way to win is to make sure the other guys don't finish at all! Available late November.

Driver 2

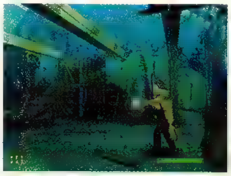
The first Driver (developed by Destruction Derby masterminds, **Reflections**) tapped into the felonious instincts of today's video gaming youth, both in the States and abroad, where the game was a runaway success. Now Driver 2 is heading home, courtesy of **Infogrames,** the game marks the appearance of...curved roads! Not only curved roads, but two-player action as well. Can you say "tag"? It may seem slightly silly, but no one really noticed that the first Driver was nothing but a series of grids and 90-degree angles. Now the environments feel much more organic and natural. Whereas the first game really didn't give you much to drive with, this time around, virtually any vehicle in the game can be hijacked via a simple third-person action sequence where you run around and liberate various owners from their cars. There are also many, many cars hidden in secret locations should you be intrepid enough to find them. Does a certain yellow car with black stripes sound enticing? It probably does. Driver 2 will crash its way into your lives this **Halloween**.

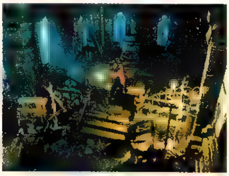


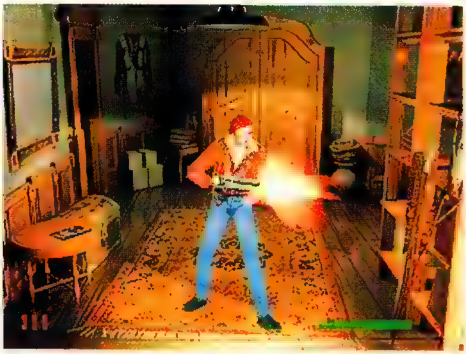


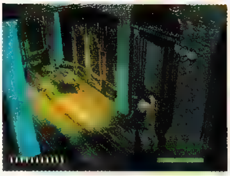
Alone in the Dark: The New Nightmare

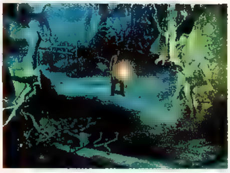
The series that invented the survival-horror genre returns. Developed by **Darkworks** for **Infogrames,** Edward Carnby and Aline Cedrac team up for a horrific adventure as amazing as it is frightening. The lighting effects alone are worth the price. Look for AitD:TNN later this **fall.**



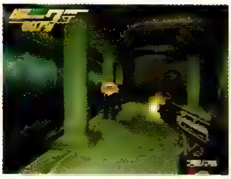


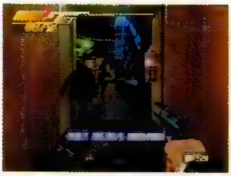


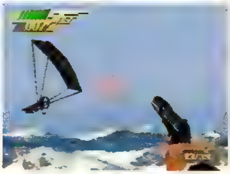




The World Is Not Enough



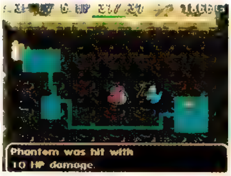




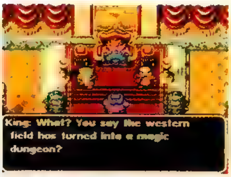
Who wouldn't want the chance to be James Bond? You know, all those nifty gadgets, blowing away bad guys without a second thought, and of course all those beautiful women with enticing yet subtle names like Pussy Galore. TWINE, the latest first-person shooter from **EA** is coming out this **fall**, allowing you to step into Jimmy's shoes and experience everything he does...well, except the women (maybe in the PS2 version!). This won't be just a total blastfest though; you'll have to use your head to survive. In fact, many missions have little to do with combat—you might be required to sneak through a mansion and do some heavy gambling to complete levels and move on. We get to blow Bond's cash at Blackjack? Sign us up!

Torneko: The Last Hope

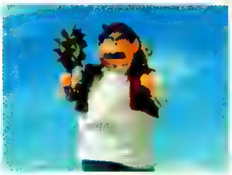
If you've played Chocobo's Dungeon 2, you don't need to wait until the **November** release—you've pretty much already played this new **Enix** game. It's got the same step-by-step dungeon crawl gameplay, randomly created levels, tons of items and enemies. This one is actually second in a series starring the Dragon Warrior character Torneko—the first was made for Nintendo's 16-Bit Super Famicom but never came to the U.S.

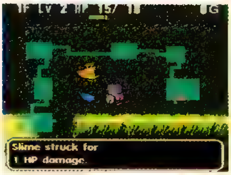


Phantom was hit with
10 HP damage.



King: What? You say the western
field has turned into a magic
dungeon?



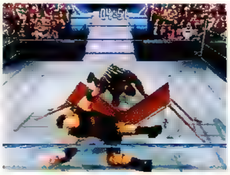


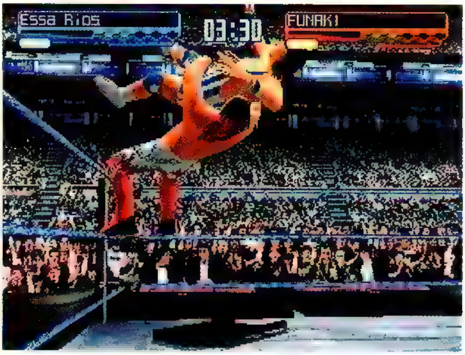
Slime struck for
1 HP damage.

GRAPPLING HOOK

WWF SmackDown! 2

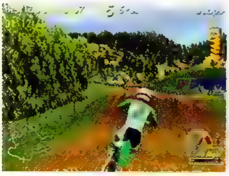
Do you like wrestling games? It doesn't matter if you like wrestling games! **THQ** is about to layeth the smacketh down on you candy-asses yet again. **Yuke's** has added more new features to SD!2 than dimples on Rakishi's butt, including The Undertaker's (American Bad-ass version) infamous Casket match and Foley's terrifying Hell in a Cell match. Players can also send someone through a table and swan-ton bomb off a ladder in the new table and ladder matches. Tag-team bouts have been updated with new double-team moves and Tornado Tag rules. With wrestling superstars jumping ship from one company to another so often, THQ has done a good job of keeping the roster up to date. SD2 includes over 50 WWF superstars, including relative newcomers like the Radicals, Chris Jericho and Trish Stratus, not to mention some supporting characters like Patterson, Brisco, Stephanie and the Posse. THQ is betting that all you jabronies out there will smell what the Rock is cookin' when SmackDown! 2 is released this **November**.

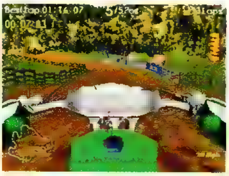


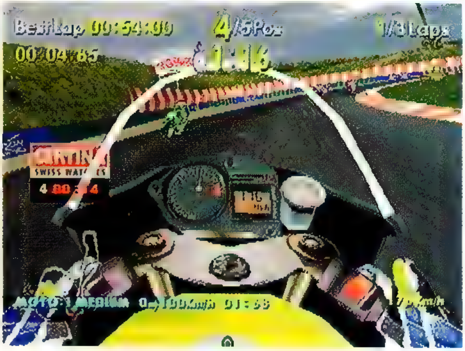


Moto Racer World Tour

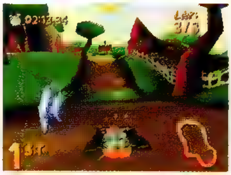
Delphine has teamed up with **Infogrames** for this third installment of the Moto Racer biking series. Featuring 18 tracks based on real-world locations, MRWT offers 34 bikes, both dirt and street racers, of 125, 250, 250 and 500 cc classes respectively. New crash animations and TV-style presentation enhance the already excellent control. Look for MRWT to arrive late this **winter**.







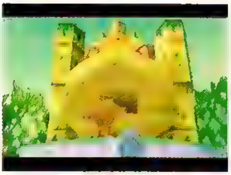
Looney Tunes Racing

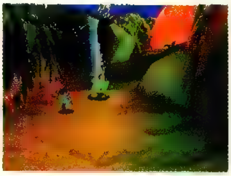


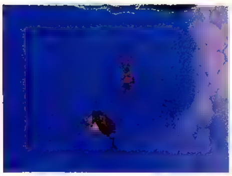
Just what we need—another cutesy Super Mario Kart/Crash Team Racing clone. If you've played any of the previous PlayStation kart racers, you know what this **Infogrames** offering is all about. There is some charm to the game—it has a lot of recognizable melodies from the cartoons, eight of the 'Tunes characters and 18 different tracks. With the Acme Challenge, you can open new tracks, characters and even artwork in return for accomplishing tasks on the tracks (collect things, shoot enemies, etc.). The progressive power-up system is also interesting since you move up a "ladder" of strength to get better goodies by picking up numbered icons on the track. It's nothing too original, but Looney Tunes fans can polish their anvils this **fall.**

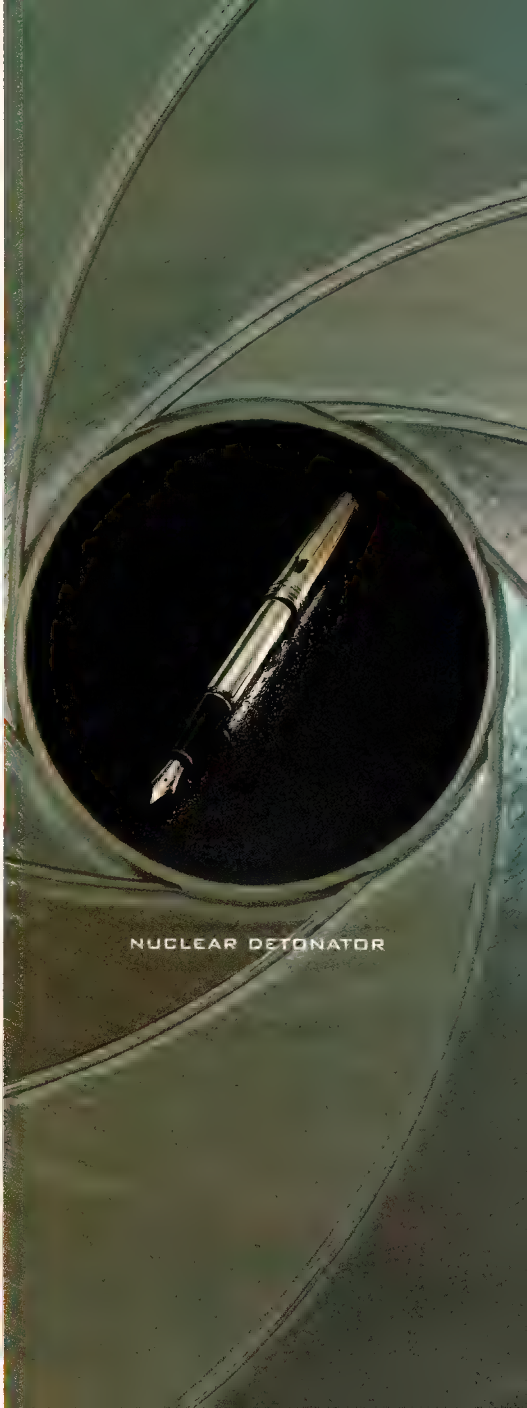
Bugs & Taz Time Busters

Two of Warner Bros.' finest team up to iron out some historical wrinkles in this **mid-November** release from **Infogrames**. Players can expect appearances from Granny, Tweety, Yosemite Sam and several other old favorites as they guide Bugs and Taz along. Advancement is based on collecting coin-like items scattered throughout each level, so fans of Mario 64 and Banjo-Kazooie stay tuned.



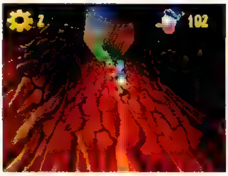


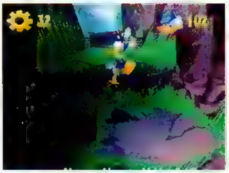


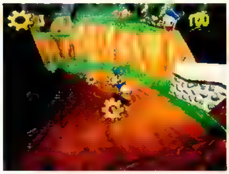


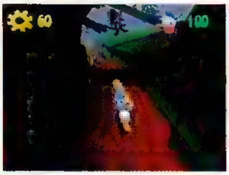
Donald Duck Goin' Quackers

Using the Rayman 2 engine, DD Goin' Quackers is a bright, peppy wigglewort of a game. Perfect for younger kids, but perhaps less challenging for older gamers. It's kind of like the "ride the animal" sections of Crash Bandicoot, minus the animal, and minus about 50% of the speed. DD Goin' Quackers is still in an early state, but shows potential. **Ubi Soft** is doing the honors, and the game should be available this **October.**



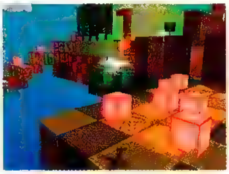


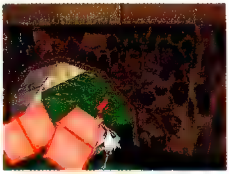


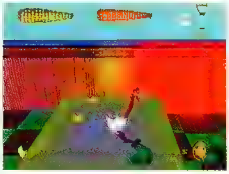


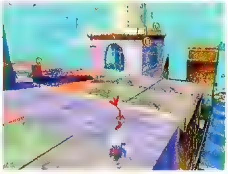
Mort the Chicken

Someone's stealing baby chickens from Mort's world, and it isn't KFC. In **Crave's** oddball combination of a 3D puzzle and platform game, you control Mort who must gather all his lil' chickies and deliver them to safety. Along the way you have to peck away (literally) at your enemies, piles of birdseed, and huge eggs that conceal power-ups such as "Corn Missiles." Get ready to cluck and pluck this **October**.



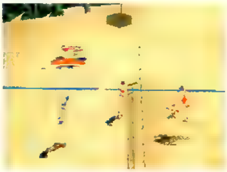


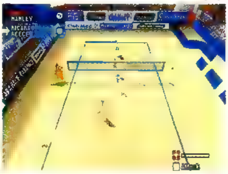




Power Spike Pro Beach Volleyball

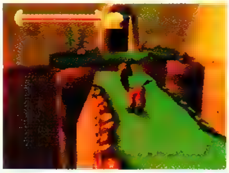
Take the lovely and talented Gabby Reece, add 45 pro volleyball players and match-'em-up in two-on-two tourneys, championships and exhibition matches and this is what you get. It's a simple game on several levels. Control consists of jumping for blocks, attacks for dives and the almighty power spike for, well, spiking. We're not sure who **Infogrames** hopes to capture with this unique title, but we'll find out this **fall**.

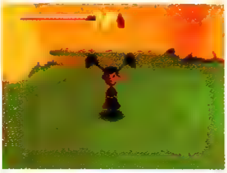


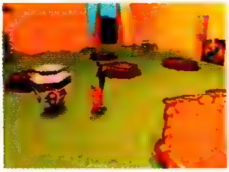


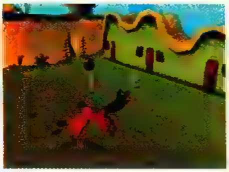
The Emperor's New Groove

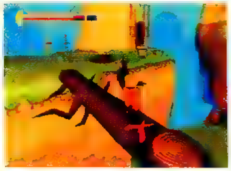
Disney's newest animated feature is coming to the PlayStation this **November**, courtesy of **Sony**. This 3D action adventure title looks and plays a lot like Spyro the Dragon (and that's an understatement), but it's got its own unique feel thanks to some very witty humor and a cool kickboxing fighting style. There's also a keen first-person shooting mode, where you can fire grape seeds at anything that annoys you.

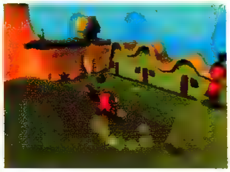






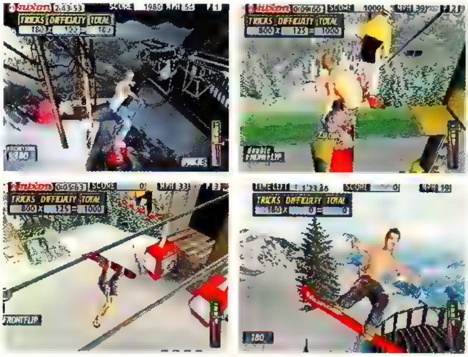




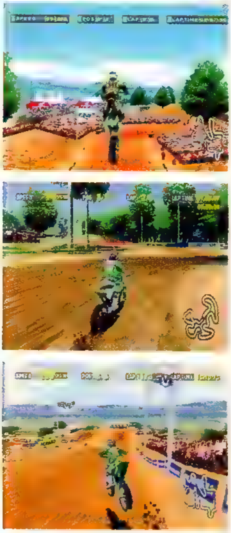


Cool Boarders 2001

The next installment of snowy goodness is coming to you this **winter** from **989 Sports**. CB 2001 offers over 20 new, multi-path courses, new tricks and an improved create-a-rider mode. Completing different objectives unlocks new courses, boards and pro riders. Players can challenge pros such as Todd Richards and Michele Taggart to one-on-one events and boost their attributes, allowing for new special moves.



Championship Motocross featuring Ricky Carmichael

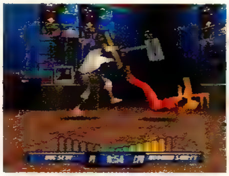
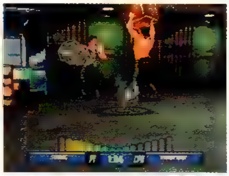
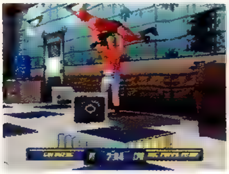
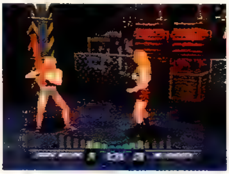
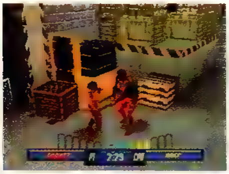
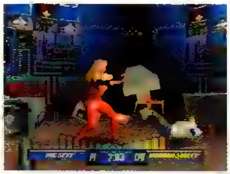


Thirty pro-riders, career mode and create-a-rider modes, a combo system, signature moves and tricks for each rider, plus the ability to play as three-time AMA champion Ricky Carmichael add up to a whole pile of reasons you may want to inspect **THQ's** latest dirt-track game. **Funcom** is back in the driver's seat for this one, and they have retained the use of their smooth graphics engine and realistic physics model, along with a nice game engine that simulates the highs, lows and bumps and jumps of motocross racing so well. CMFRC is scheduled to collide with the PS2 launch, right at the end of **October**.

MISSILE LAUNCHER

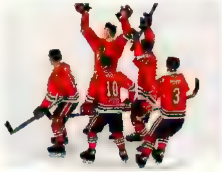
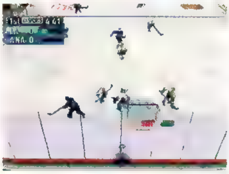
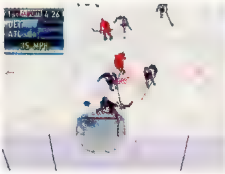
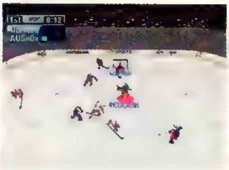
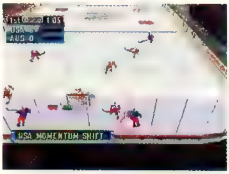
WCW Backstage Assault

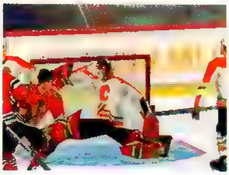
Don't have an N64, but want some WCW Backstage Assault action? Never fear, **EA** is here! This follow-up to WCW Mayhem ditches those boring old ring matches for unbridled trailer-park panic in the form of three "leveled" battle environments, 40 useable objects to bash brains with, a buttload of characters, and oodles of FMV that N64 owners will never see. Look for WCW Backstage Assault to arrive in stores this **fall.**

NHL 2001

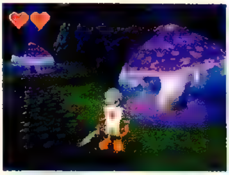
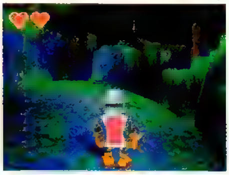
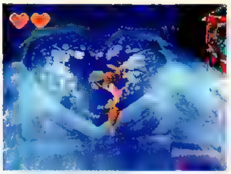
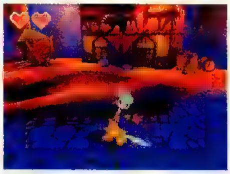
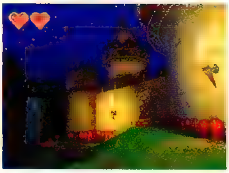
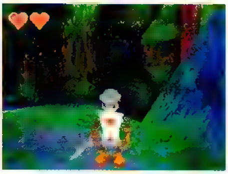
Like Madden, **EA's** NHL series seems like it's on cruise control. It's basically last year's game with a few more bells and whistles—a new momentum meter, more camera angles, authentic crowd involvement and additional teams (Ukraine and Latvia). As for gameplay, you can now add "cannon shots" and one-footed wristers to your scoring arsenal. NHL 2001 hits the stores in **September**.



Deuce

Who would ever expect **Midway** to release not only a platform game, but a *funky-fresh* platform game? Deuce is a playing-card (you read that right), who travels with a wizard and a warrior, in an attempt to rescue the Royal Family, and thus become crowned a knight. Magic, melee weapons and more are at Deuce's disposal in this Alice In Wonderland-ish adventure. Look for it this **November.**

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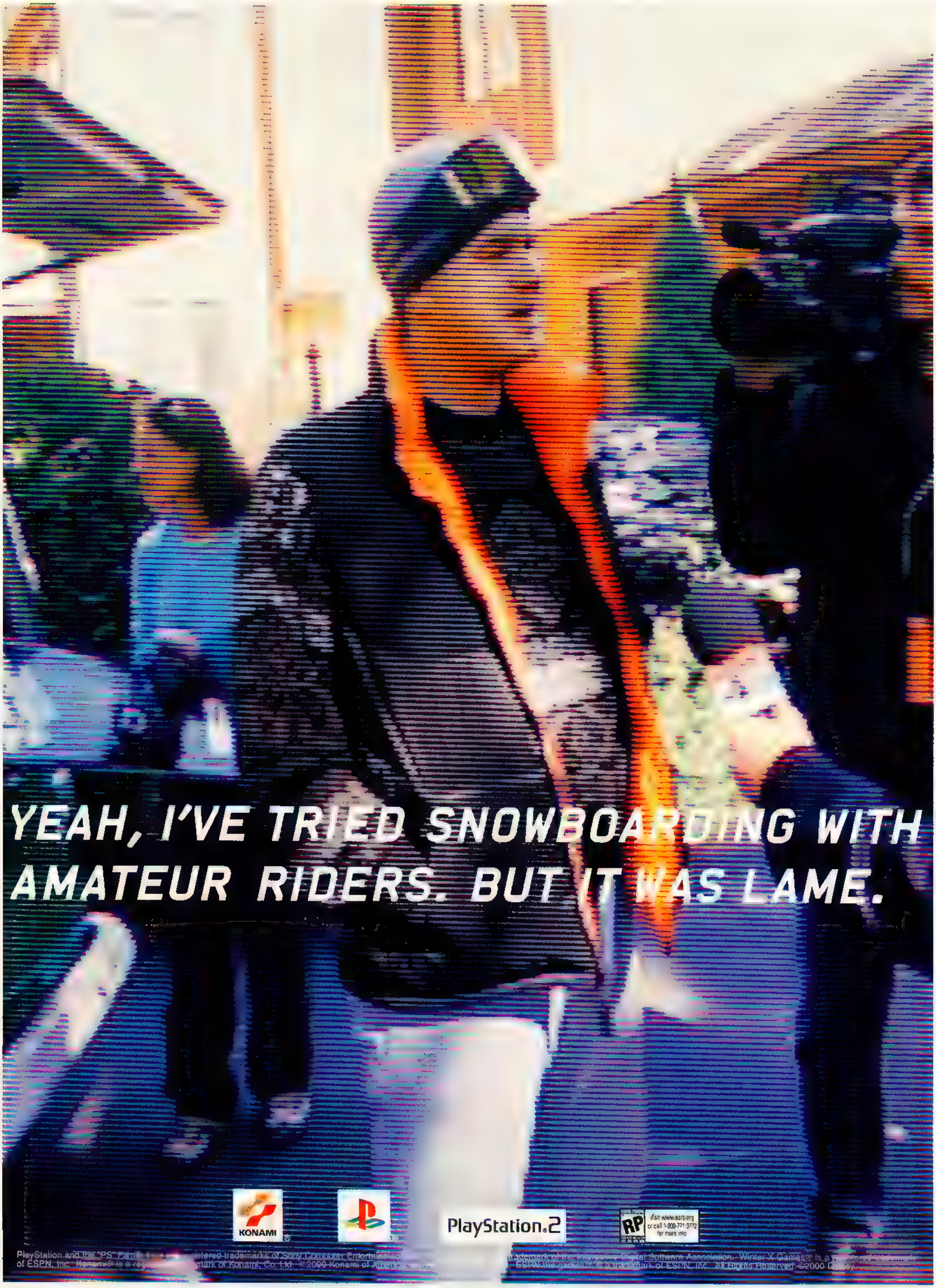
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DANGER MOUSE

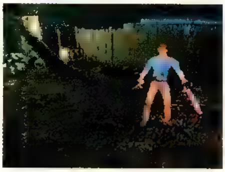
"Crikey!"

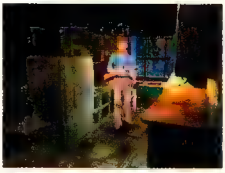
DANGER IS MY MIDDLE NAME!

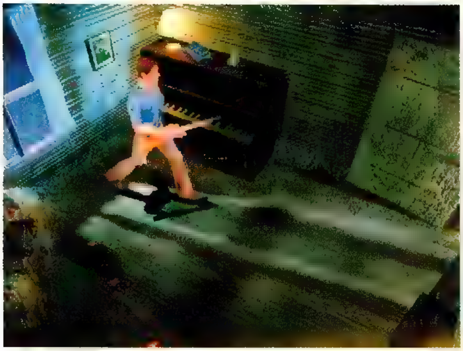
Danger Girl is loads of fun. But there's another dangerous do-gooder out there, and his name is Danger Mouse. This British rodent is loved all around the world, and tons of info can be found at http://www.dangermouse.org/. Skip on over there to see what DM and his sidekick Penfold are up to.

Evil Dead: Hail to the King

Due out in time for **Halloween,** Evil Dead: Hail to the King takes the Bruce Campbell cult hit and straps it to Sony's 32-Bit console. Have shotgun and chainsaw, will travel. Get ready to take on the Deadites through a vast array of prerendered backgrounds that give "survival-horror" a new meaning. Let's hope **THQ** and **Heavy Iron** get the gameplay thing down in time for its release.

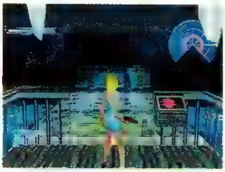


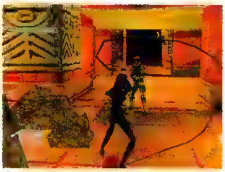


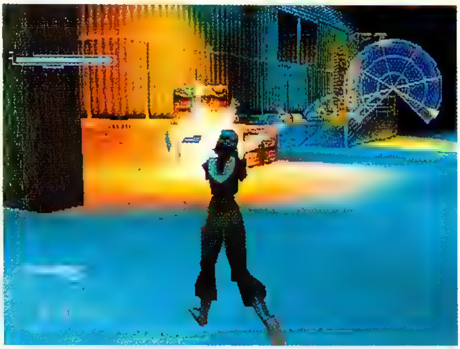


Danger Girl

Based on J. Scott Campbell's comic book of the same name, Danger Girl is a third-person action game along the lines of Tomb Raider, minus its trademark stiff-as-a-board control. Danger Girl offering three different playable characters. Players will be able to crouch, jump and snipe through a variety of levels. Danger Girl is almost Syphon Filter-y in a sexy sort of way. **THQ** plans to have Danger Girl in stores by the time you read this.







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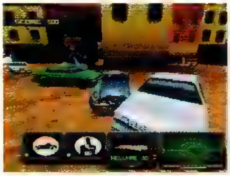
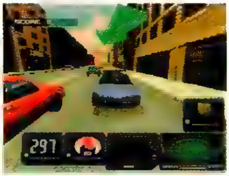
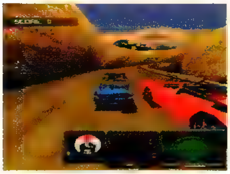
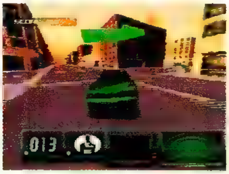
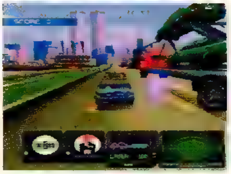
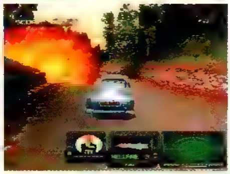
007 Racing

The "racing" part of 007 Racing is a little deceiving. This isn't just a racer featuring a Bond theme, instead it's more like a mission-based action game—each level has some sort of task, such as rescuing a prisoner or racing against time with a bomb in your car. **EA** has this game set for a **November** release, which gives them time to lower the currently insane difficulty level down a notch or two.

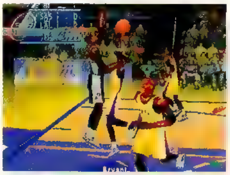



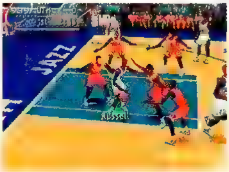



NBA ShootOut 2001

The new version of ShootOut, due out in **October**, plays and looks very similar to last year's, which seems to be the case with **989 Sports**' annual crop of games. There are some new player animations, but aside from that, the focus here is added details, like the college draft mode, team-specific playbooks and play creation mode. Plays could be used more this year since the half-court offense also runs more realistically.

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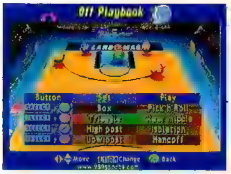
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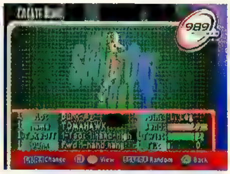
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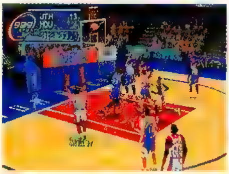
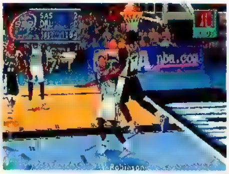
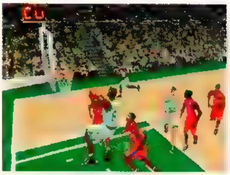
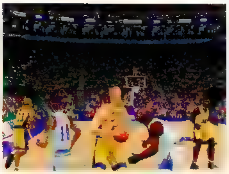
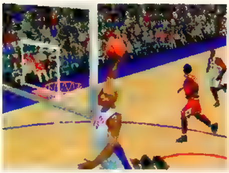
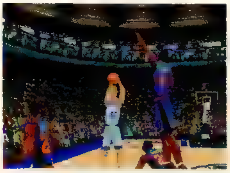
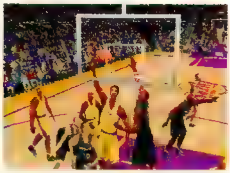
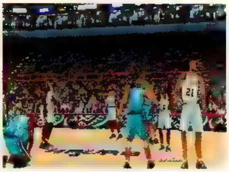


nba.com
Robinson

NBA Live 2001

EA's roundball series is nearing the end of its championship run on the current PS hardware. Did they save the best for last? The early version we played includes all the requisite Live-style goodies with only a minor assortment of upgrades. One area this year's game focuses on is the low-post game, as you can now perform new up-and-under and drop-step moves. Look for NBA Live 2001 sometime this **fall**.

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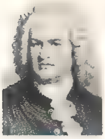
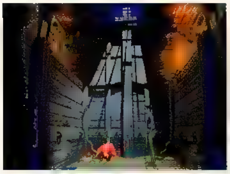


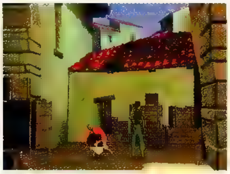
IS THAT A [illegible] IN YOUR POCKET?

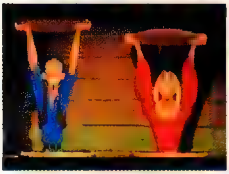
The Maestromusic isn't the first time a video game has revolved around classical music. In 1993, Microprose released CPU Bach on the 3DO, developed by celebrated game designer Sid Meier (whose credits include Civilization and Railroad Tycoon). In it, a virtual J.S. Bach would play music according to the parameters you set. 'Twas a lot of fun. No really, it was!

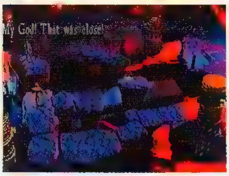
Gold and Glory: The Road to El Dorado

Based on the DreamWorks movie, **Ubi Soft's** Road to El Dorado is an adventure in the old PC sense of the genre. You'll play as both the movie's main characters, Tulio and Miguel, as you search for items and talk with characters to solve puzzles and find the lost city of gold in **December.**



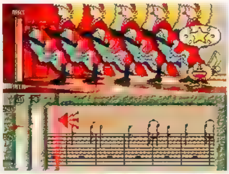


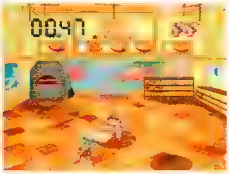


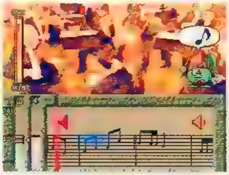


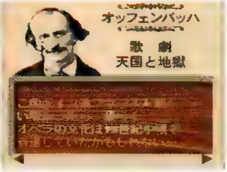
The Maestromusic

Ever think you'd use a baton to play a video game? In **Global A Entertainment's** The Maestromusic, you use a special baton controller (included with the game) to conduct the music. You have to vary the speed and strength of your motions, matching them to the required level of the music. Mini-games like "Mr. Pizzaler" (bottom left) unlock when you finish the game, and you can even read up on the featured composers.



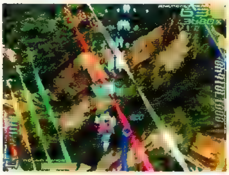


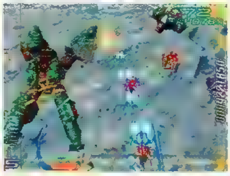


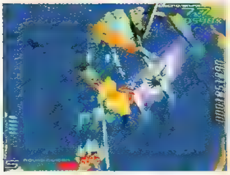


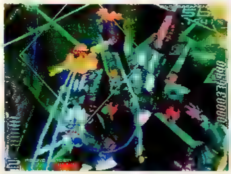
RayCrisis

After a long hiatus, **Working Designs' Spaz** label is making a return appearance on the PlayStation this **fall** with RayCrisis, the sequel to RayStorm and Galactic Attack (remember that old Saturn shooter from Acclaim?). It features all the frantic shooting action you'd expect from a **Taito** game, and even includes a PocketStation mini-game to mess with. Check out our review of RayCrisis in this issue.



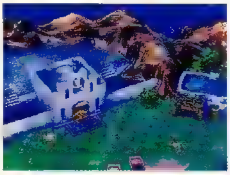


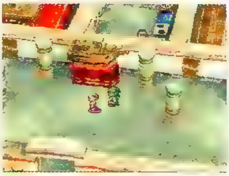


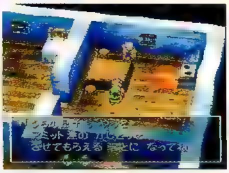


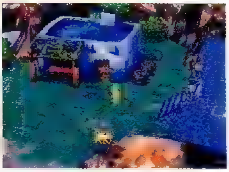
Dragon Warrior VII

Finally, it's out! **Enix** has released the long-awaited Dragon Warrior VII in Japan (OK, we know it's called Dragon Quest over there), and we (along with nearly 2 million others) nabbed a copy the morning of release. We've only had a few hours with it so far, but we can at least say that if you liked the past games in the DQ series, you're probably going to like this one too. Be sure to check back next month for a full preview.









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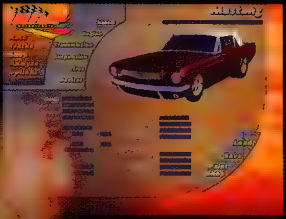
Nitro Burning Dragsters

The Hottest Drivers

Coming In November!

Full Body and Paint Shop



Build Your Ultimate Dragster

Internet Multiplayer

- Comes with more than 50 dragsters, or customize your own!
- Tweak and tune over 70 different components in the car shop to build the ultimate dragster.
- Custom paint shop lets you create your own, special look.
- Spectacular graphics bring the action to life, including hair-raising crashes.
- Day and night racing on 10 IHRA-sanctioned tracks!
- Realistic physics and incredible car dynamics deliver all of the fantastic action of real-life drag racing.

Dreamcast™

PlayStation

RATING PENDING RP CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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Sicherheitshinweise

Vor dem Start die Sicherheitsgurte fest anlegen. Du fliegst im Porsche 911 Turbo.

Mesures De Sécurité

Veillez à bien attacher vos ceintures en vue du démarrage imminent. Vous vous trouvez à bord de la Porsche 911 turbo.

安全のために

離陸時には、必ずシートベルトをしっかりと締めてください。
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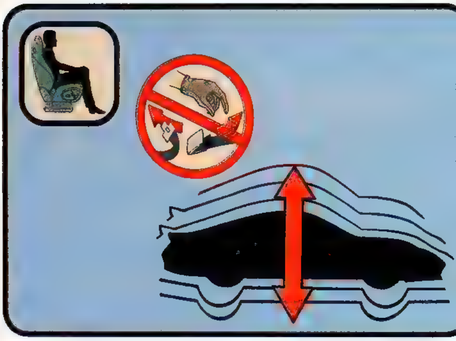
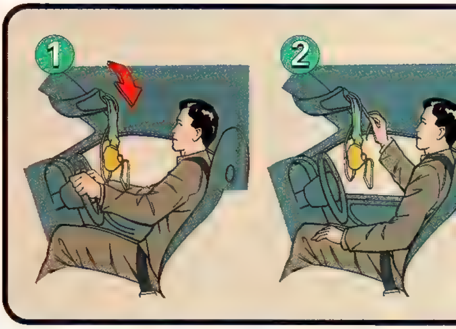
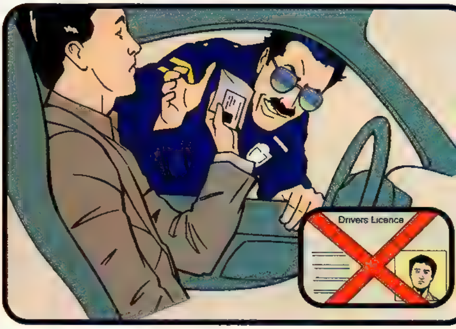
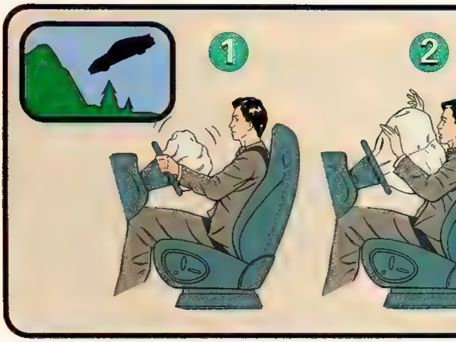
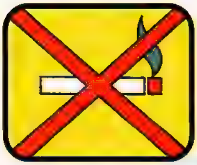
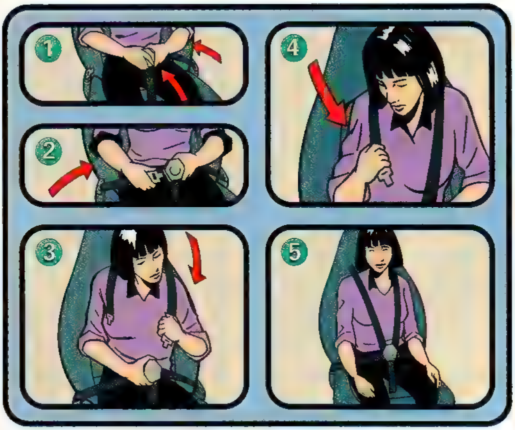


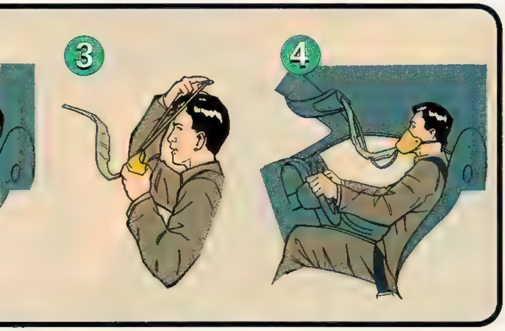


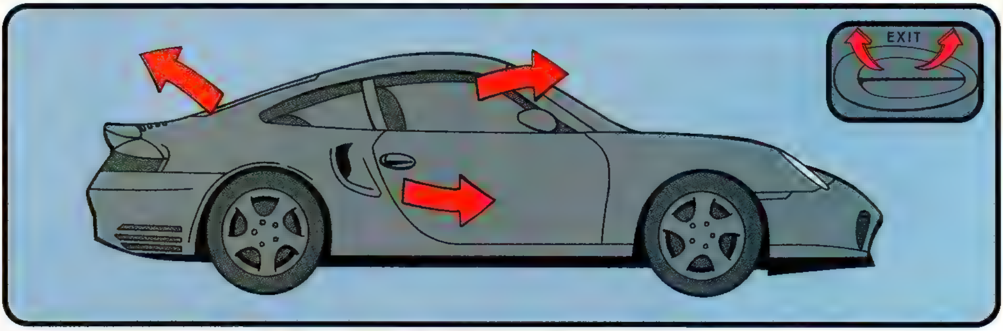


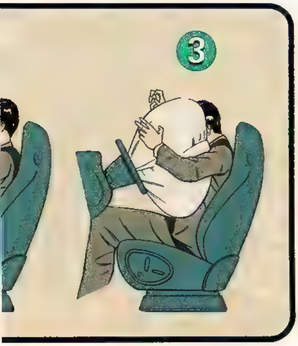




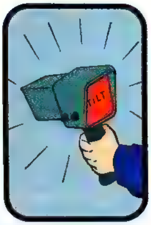




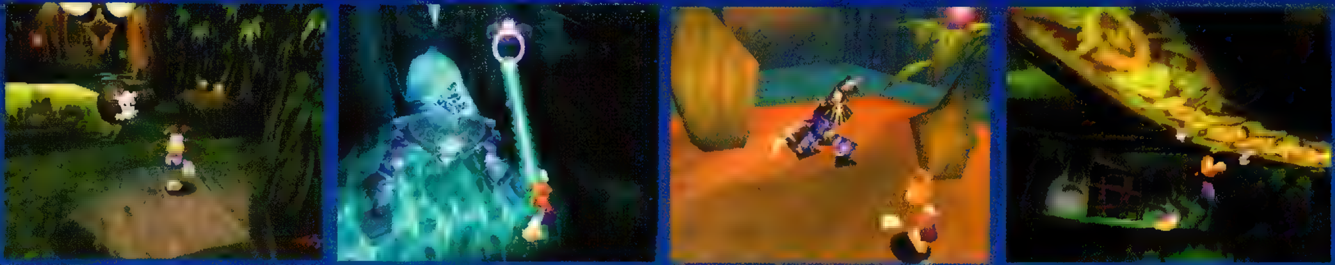




EXIT OPERATION:
OBSERVE SURROUNDINGS. IF SCENERY IS MOVING–REMAIN IN VEHICLE. IF STATIONARY, PROCEED WITH CAUTION TO NEAREST EXIT.



RAYMAN 2
PlayStation



All screenshots taken from the PlayStation® game console.

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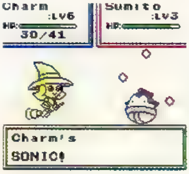
PREVIEW

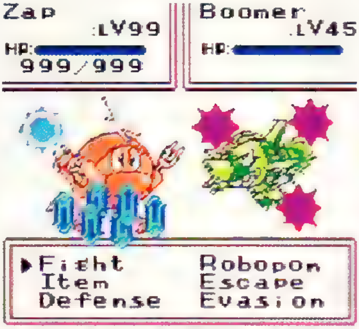
Robopon

Publisher:	Atlus
Developer:	Hudson
Players:	1-2
Genre:	RPG
% Done:	95%
Release:	November
Also Try:	Pokémon R/B/Y
Web Address:	www.atlus.com
The Good:	A fun Pokémon alternative with loads of gimmicks.
The Bad:	Too similar to Pokémon in spots.
And The Ugly:	Pokémon Gold & Silver come out at the same time.



Charm's
SONIC!

Some of these little contraptions put any Pokémon to shame in the sickeningly cute department.



As you can see from the screenshot on the right, battles play out in a style very similar to the ubiquitous Pokémon.

In the world of handheld gaming, there are two types of games: the Pokémons and the Pokénots. Seeking to capitalize on the success of the former, while offering the innovation of the latter, Atlus' Robopon wraps Pokémon-inspired gameplay around solid RPG storytelling, throwing in a couple of cool gimmicks for good measure.

One day, Grandpa Hogle, tired of seeing his Robopon Dispatching Facility stagnate, gives control to his grandson, Cody. Oddly enough, Cody's efforts to rebuild the company quickly evolve into wholesale Robopon raising and battling. Sound familiar? With 150 Robopon to collect, evolve and train through a series of one-on-one battles, the game unashamedly mimics Nintendo's franchise. Thankfully, though, it also breaks this mold in a number of ways.

For starters, Robopon's battle system is much more diverse. You acquire new attacks by purchasing and finding software packages, which fall into five elemental categories: earth, wind, water, electricity and fire. While each piece of software represents a single attack, they can be combined to form stronger assaults. Different Robopon have a propensity for different attacks. Arm-type Robopon are generally good with close attacks, while Boot-type Robopon excel at defensive maneuvers. Combine this with inherent strengths and weaknesses based upon the aforementioned elements, and what you have is more than 300 unique attacks with three dimensions of strategy.

Evolving Robopon is accomplished a variety of ways. Leveling up increases your statistics, but to evolve Robopon you need to feed your team energy balls won in battle. Then, when your Robopon begins to glow, it is time to bring it to the lab and have it transformed. Some require greater amounts of energy to evolve than others, while other Robopon can't evolve at all. You can also choose not to evolve your lil' robot buddies, instead opting to upgrade their CPU and software characteristics.

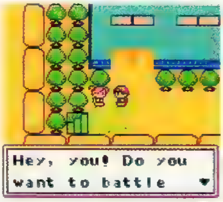
In addition to incorporating the one-on-one battle and trading options found in Pokémon, Robopon's link mode offers four additional arenas for various events. There's a jumping contest, a shield mode to see who can take the most punishment, and an arm mode to see who can dole it out the best. You can battle for a belt in the Robopon title match as well.

The cartridge itself contains a GB KISS infrared port. It also has a built-in real-time clock and speaker system, alerting you when something is happening in the game. Top it off with a quirky big-business sub-plot and Robopon might just have enough to step out of Pikachu's great shadow.

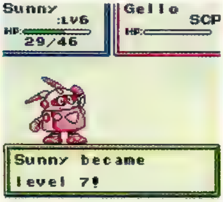
GAME BOY KISS

Kissin' Cool!

Robopon's instructions suggest a near-endless set of possibilities by using an infrared remote control with the game. Using a Sony universal remote, we tested this assertion. After trying 12 different TV and VCR brands, we gave up. If the possibilities aren't endless, they're darn close. Even though you can only use it with chests or in labs, power-ups run the gamut from useless to utterly valuable. During evolutions, you can haphazardly add or subtract levels or hit points. Should you run into a door you can't unlock, no problem, just use your remote to open it. There's nothing better than evolving your Robopon only to have random button mashing increase your attack statistic by 10 points.



Hey, you! Do you want to battle ▼

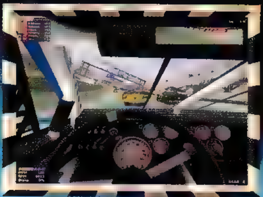


Sunny became level 7!

FIVE LAPS TO GO.
PACK ON YOUR TAIL.
TIRES READY TO SHRED.
IT'S CALLED HEAT.
Bobby Labonte

NASCAR® HEAT™

Actual game footage



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EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

CD-ROM WIN 95/98

PlayStation

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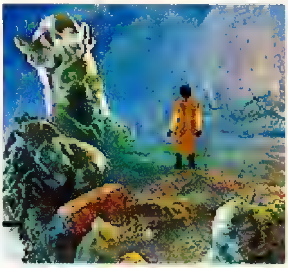
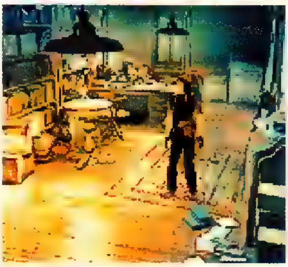
Alone In The Dark: The New Nightmare

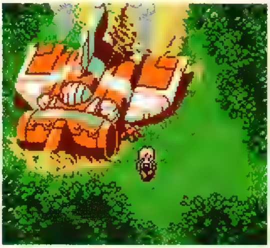


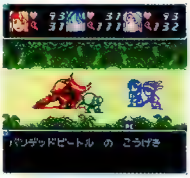


Looking at these screens, the first thing that comes to mind is, "That's on GBC?!" The answer is an emphatic "Yes." Whether the final version will be able to handle the slated background and sprite scaling smoothly while retaining its high-quality appearance remains to be seen, but the game looks fantastic so far. Let's hope AITD succeeds where the fabled Game Boy Color version of Resident Evil failed.

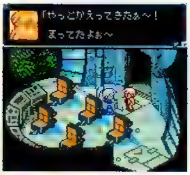
Star Ocean Blue Sphere

Tri-Ace itself is developing this sequel to their PlayStation RPG Star Ocean: The Second Story. The Game Boy edition features 16 characters—including many from Second Story (recognize any from the screens here?). You control a single character during combat (the computer controls the other two) and take on enemies one at a time.

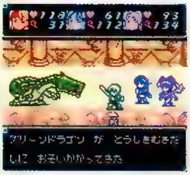




バンデッドビートル の こうげき



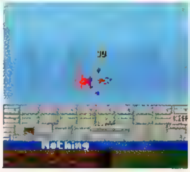
「やっとかえってきたぁ～！
まってたよぉ～

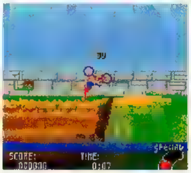


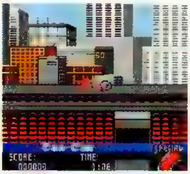
グリーンドラゴン が とうしをむきだしに おそいかかってきた

Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX

Like its PS and DC big brothers, this little pup features half pipe, dirt and vert action. Mat along with seven other pros are available for single-player action only (unfortunately there is no link play). As you can see from these pics, the emphasis is on mid-air tricks and maneuvers. Hoffman GBC is set for a **November** release.

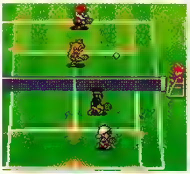


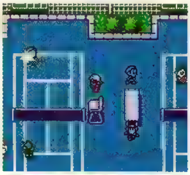


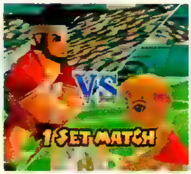


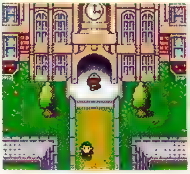
Mario Tennis GBC

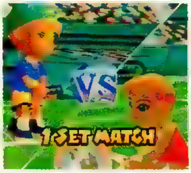
Looks like we guessed right a few issues back when we first saw Mario Tennis for the N64—a Game Boy Color edition is on the way, due this **November in Japan and early next year in the U.S**. It's basically to tennis what Mario Golf was to golf—lots of easy-to-pick-up, fun-to-play, very arcadey tennis matches (you only use the A button) strung together with light RPG aspects. Also like Mario Golf, you can build your character up after you win games in areas like power, control and running speed, plus open up four new characters in the N64 game by using the Transfer Pak (see screens at right). Mario Tennis even supports the link cable for two-player games. **Camelot** (the same company that did Mario Golf) is working on this one for **Nintendo**, so we're expecting great things.

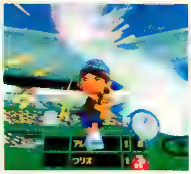












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The New Nightmare
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RATING PENDING RP CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

PC CD ROM

PlayStation

Dreamcast.

DARKWORKS GAME DEVELOPMENT STUDIO

INFOGRAMES

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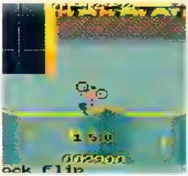
PREVIEW GALLERY

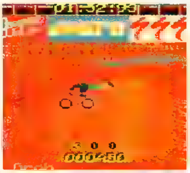
MECHANICAL MICROCOSM

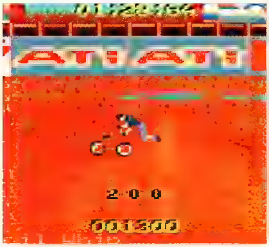
You probably know that Micro Machines, the toys, have been around quite awhile, but you might not know that there's been so many Micro Machine-themed video games. It's one of the quietest monster franchises. There's Micro Machines 1 and 2: Twin Turbo (pictured left) for the NES and GBC, Micro Machines 64, Micro Machines V3 PlayStation, and finally this one for the GBC and Micro Machines 4/2000 for the PlayStation.

MTV Sports: Ultimate BMX

Six pro riders, signature moves, real-life sponsors, customizable bikes, and dirt, street and vert modes all add up to one funky BMX game. Apparently, a large number of tricks, both land and air, have been implemented. Tricks such as the Superman Seat Grab, Indian Air, 720s and grinds can be used over the six courses. **THQ** will publish the game this **fall.**



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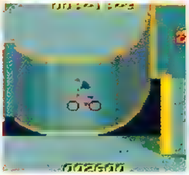
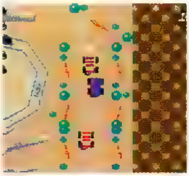
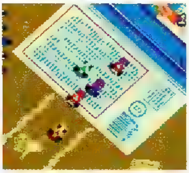
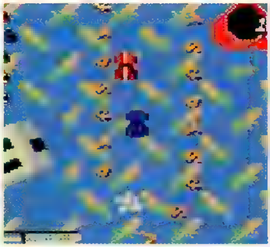


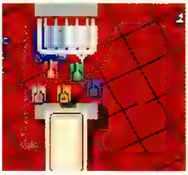
Micro Machines V3

It appears that **Network Technologies** is delivering one of the few GB titles that remains true to the console version. As the name implies, you race "micro" vehicles on tracks that range from a dinner table to a pair of pants. There are eight different tracks, 15 vehicles, and an eight-player mode that gives this game the potential to be one of the better GBC racing titles when it arrives this **fall.**



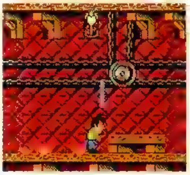


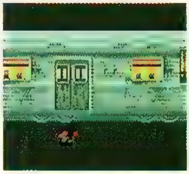


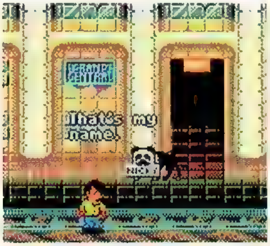


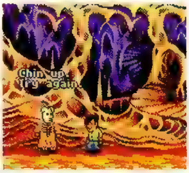
Little Nicky

Mirroring the story of the upcoming Adam Sandler flick, Little Nicky charges the player with 14 platform levels and close to a dozen mini-games. A battery of moves are at Nicky's disposal, including a flaming burp and "evil ray." How **Ubi Soft** will keep the ESRB happy remains to be seen—**Digital Eclipse** has apparently kept the Sandler spirit, for better or for worse. Nicky GBC will be singeing shelves **Nov. 17**.



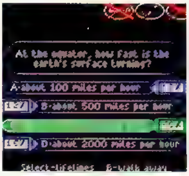



That's my name.
NICKY


Chin up
Try again

Who Wants To Be A Millionaire-2nd Edition

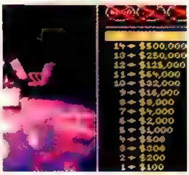
Get with Regis and company in the handheld version of the runaway hit TV show. Developed by Eurocom and published by **THQ,** WWTBAM2E features over 600 questions, and all the features (lifelines, etc.) found in the actual show. It's due in stores this **October.**


At the equator, how fast is the earth's surface turning?

A-about 100 miles per hour

B-about 500 miles per hour

D-about 2000 miles per hour
Select-lifelines
B-walk away


14 ← $500,000
13 ← $250,000
12 ← $125,000
11 ← $64,000
10 ← $32,000
9 ← $16,000
8 ← $8,000
7 ← $4,000
6 ← $2,000
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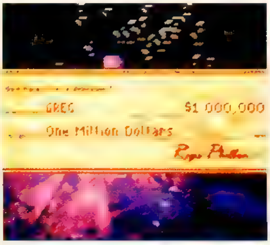
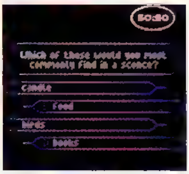
4 ← $500
3 ← $300
2 ← $200
1 ← $100


GREG
$1 000,000
One Million Dollars
Regis Philbin



Which of these would you most commonly find in a sconce?

Candle

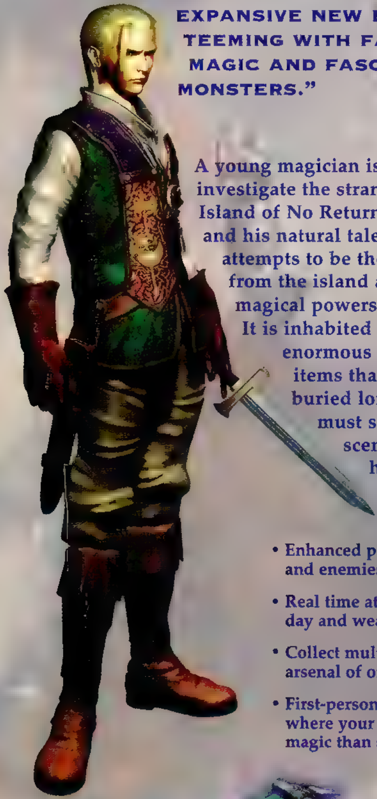
Food

Birds

Books

WHO SAID FANTASIES HAD TO BE FINAL?

PlayStation 2
ETERNAL RING
TEEN
T
agetec



> "WONDERFUL VISUALS OF AN EXPANSIVE NEW ENVIRONMENT TEEMING WITH FANCIFUL MAGIC AND FASCINATING MONSTERS."
>
> – GAMER'S REPUBLIC

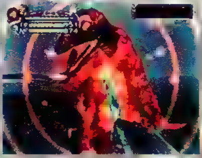
A young magician is sent by his King to investigate the strange happenings on the Island of No Return. Armed with his sword and his natural talent as a sorcerer, Cain attempts to be the first person to return from the island alive. Legend has it that magical powers are at rest on this island. It is inhabited by numerous beasts, enormous dragons, and magical items that were supposed to be buried long ago. As Cain, the player must solve several baffling scenarios whilst keeping his hide intact in his search for the ultimate magic ring.

- Enhanced polygon graphics of giant dragons and enemies in a completely 3D world.
- Real time atmospheric effects include time of day and weather FX.
- Collect multiple magic rings to build an arsenal of offensive and defensive spells.
- First-person perspective in an RPG adventure where your combat skills will rely more on magic than swordplay.

Terrifying monsters inhabit the island of No Return

Collection
Fire Ball
Attack Magic

Gather magic rings to cast devastating spells



First-person view requires precise combat skills

ETERNAL RING™

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TEEN
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

agetec™

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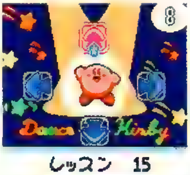
Kirby Tilt 'n' Tumble

Nintendo recently released Koro Koro Kirby, the Japanese version of what will be called Kirby Tilt 'n' Tumble in the U.S. when it's released on **Dec. 4.** The tilt function of the cartridge works really well. Only problem is that it's a bit of a chore to keep it in direct light while moving around. Each level is divided into four sub-levels, ending with a boss. There are often multiple paths to take, some not-so obvious. You'll be forced to float through the air by inhaling balloons, steer rafts over river currents, and ride on moving clouds to get past the game's tough levels. Finding a large blue star hidden in each level gives you a chance to take on one of five mini-games, including a dancing game (top left) and hurdle race.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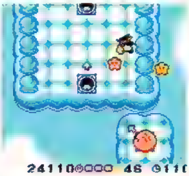
Dance Kirby
レッスン 15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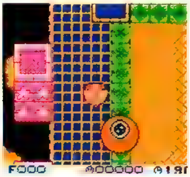
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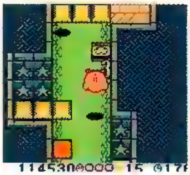
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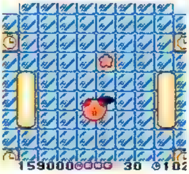
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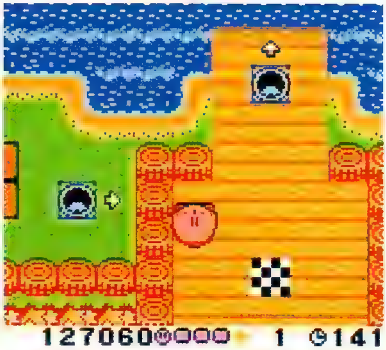
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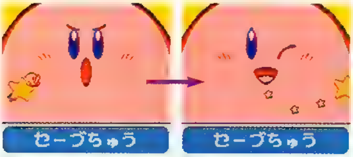
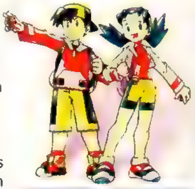
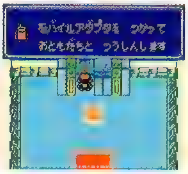

セーブちゅう
セーブちゅう

How well you do on each level determines whether you get a smile or a frown from Kirby while the game saves.

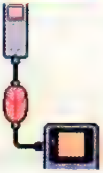
Pokémon Crystal

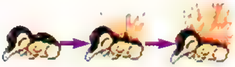
Gold and Silver just weren't enough. **Nintendo** will release Pokémon Crystal in **Japan on Dec. 14** to coincide with the release of the Mobile System GB adapter (see Press Start). The biggest addition in Crystal is the ability to trade/battle 'mons over a cell phone! Each monster has been given new entrance animations for battle, and there's a new "mystery" girl sporting silver/blue hair (shown at right) who could be a main character. Crystal will come to the **U.S. in 2001**. Nintendo is still figuring out how to implement the cell phone feature for the U.S. (it may use normal phone lines instead).

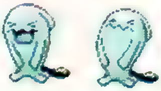




モバイルアダプタを つかって
おともだちと つうしんします



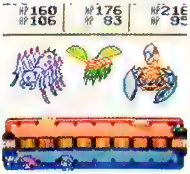




Check out the all-new Pokémon animations.

Grandia Parallel Trippers

One pleasant surprise at Space World was **Hudson's** announcement of Grandia for the GBC. The unique battle system remains intact, and it seems like most of the characters are from the original game as well. Grandia will hit **Japanese stores on Dec. 15**. As of yet no U.S. release date has been set, but hopefully Ubi Soft is considering it.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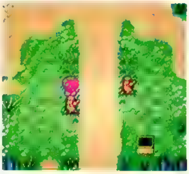
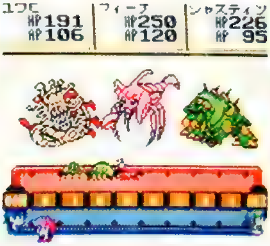
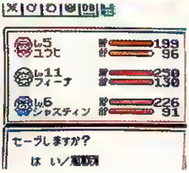
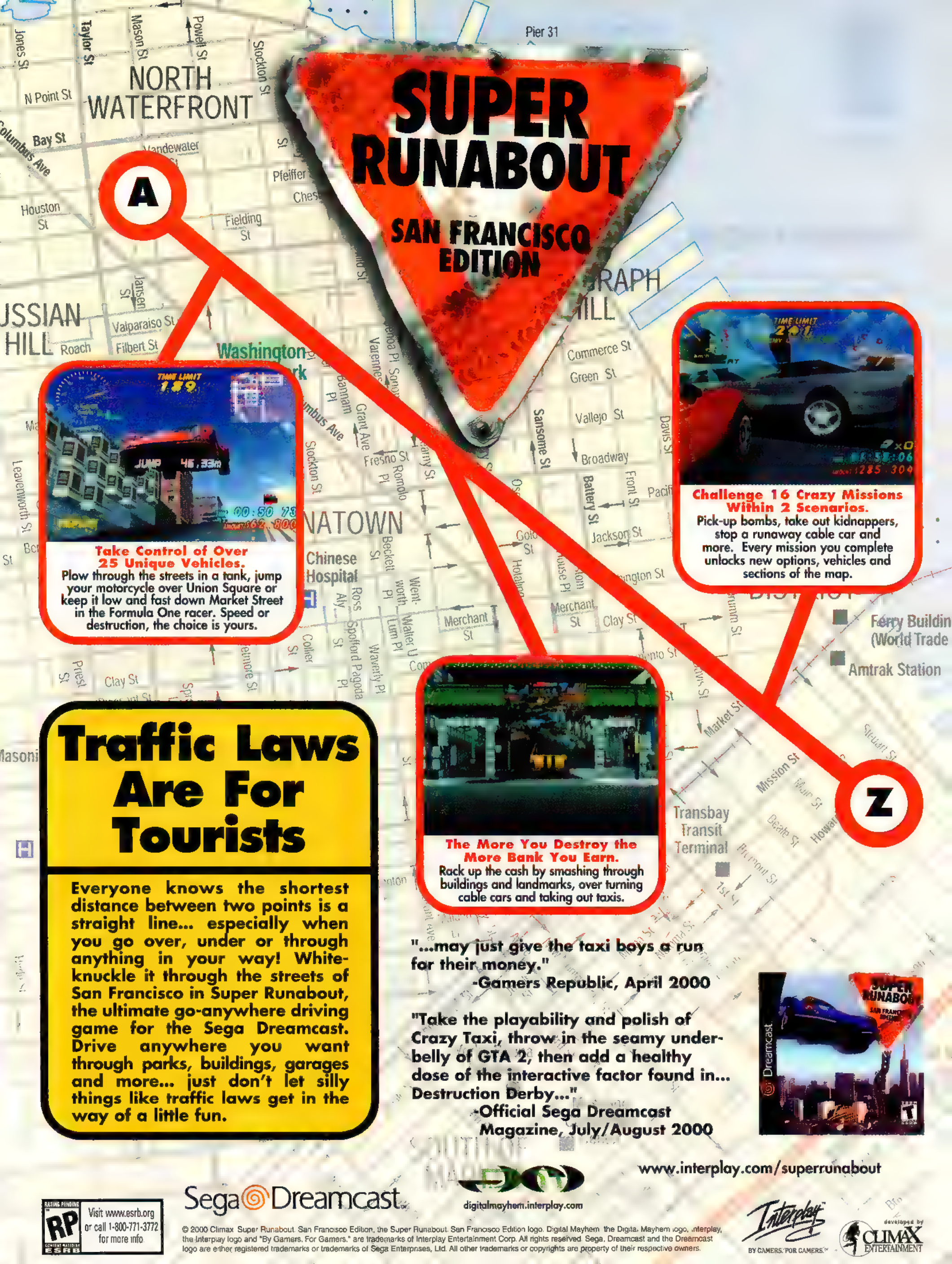
HP176 AP 83
HP216 AP 95




ユウヒ HP191 AP106
フィーナ HP250 AP120
ジャスティン HP226 AP 95


Lv5 ユウヒ HP 199 AP 96
Lv11 フィーナ HP 250 AP 130
Lv6 ジャスティン HP 226 AP 91

セーブしますか？
はい/いいえ


SUPER RUNABOUT
SAN FRANCISCO EDITION
A
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Pier 31
NORTH WATERFRONT
RUSSIAN HILL
TELEGRAPH HILL
CHINATOWN
Washington Park
Chinese Hospital
Transbay Transit Terminal
Ferry Building (World Trade
Amtrak Station
Jones St
Taylor St
Mason St
Powell St
Stockton St
N Point St
Bay St
Columbus Ave
Vandewater
Pfeiffer
Houston St
Fielding St
Jansen St
Valparaiso St
Filbert St
Roach
Leavenworth St
Bannam Pl
Grant Ave
Fresno St
Romolo Pl
Beckett St
Wentworth
Walter U Lum Pl
Ross Aly
Spofford
Pagoda Pl
Waverly Pl
Merchant St
Clay St
Commerce St
Green St
Vallejo St
Broadway
Sansome St
Battery St
Front St
Davis St
Jackson St
Market St
Mission St
Beale St
Fremont St
Howard
1st St
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TIME LIMIT
1:59
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2:01
SUPER RUNABOUT
SAN FRANCISCO EDITION
Dreamcast
T

Take Control of Over 25 Unique Vehicles.
Plow through the streets in a tank, jump your motorcycle over Union Square or keep it low and fast down Market Street in the Formula One racer. Speed or destruction, the choice is yours.

Challenge 16 Crazy Missions Within 2 Scenarios.
Pick-up bombs, take out kidnappers, stop a runaway cable car and more. Every mission you complete unlocks new options, vehicles and sections of the map.

The More You Destroy the More Bank You Earn.
Rack up the cash by smashing through buildings and landmarks, over turning cable cars and taking out taxis.

Traffic Laws Are For Tourists

Everyone knows the shortest distance between two points is a straight line... especially when you go over, under or through anything in your way! White-knuckle it through the streets of San Francisco in Super Runabout, the ultimate go-anywhere driving game for the Sega Dreamcast. Drive anywhere you want through parks, buildings, garages and more... just don't let silly things like traffic laws get in the way of a little fun.

"...may just give the taxi boys a run for their money."
-Gamers Republic, April 2000

"Take the playability and polish of Crazy Taxi, throw in the seamy underbelly of GTA 2, then add a healthy dose of the interactive factor found in... Destruction Derby..."
-Official Sega Dreamcast Magazine, July/August 2000

www.interplay.com/superrunabout

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Visit www.esrb.org or call 1-800-771-3772 for more info

Sega Dreamcast

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CLIMAX ENTERTAINMENT

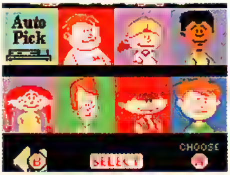
LIVE
Jerry Rice

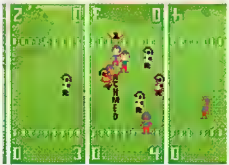
BACKYARD BIOGRAPHY

These Backyard games for the PlayStation and GBC have come out of the blue, making our heads spin. Apparently, they've gained some attention on the PC as kid's games that emphasize character and teamwork. For example, grouping kids friendly with each other strengthens the overall team: Right now, there's football, soccer and baseball, with plans of more to come. If you want to know more about these, go to www.humongoussports.com and enjoy. Diapers not included.

Backyard Football

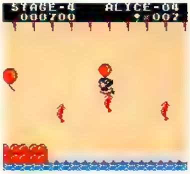
As if the PC and PlayStation versions of this younger-skewed sports title weren't simple enough, **Humongous Entertainment** is bringing the game to the GBC this **fall.** Here's a few kiddified pros such as Aikman, McNair, Seau, Bledsoe and Favre, but don't be fooled—there is very little real to the game aside from throwing to your open receiver. Who knows—it could work just perfectly for the small Game Boy screen.

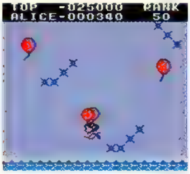




Balloon Fight GB

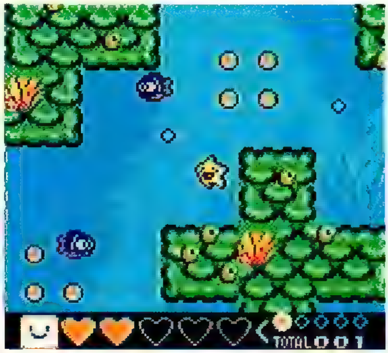
Available only through the **Nintendo** Power distribution service at Lawson convenience stores in Japan, Balloon Fight GB is a modern take on the classic NES title (which is also included). Fly through multiple, auto-scrolling levels collecting balloons, all the while avoiding sharp objects. While BF's graphics are upgraded, the gameplay is the same "Joust" technique. Flap your arms to stay afloat and avoid the obstacles. It's available **now in Japan**.

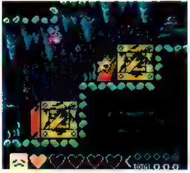


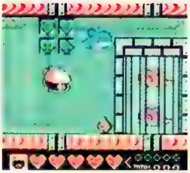


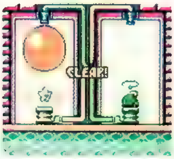
Legend of Starfi

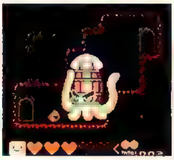
There's trouble in the sky kingdom of Tenkai. Accident-prone prince Starfi has been marooned deep in the ocean. Run, jump and spin bash your way through watery dangers as Starfi in this side-scrolling platformer, similar in style to the Kirby games. Starfi lands in Japan courtesy of **Nintendo** this **December.**





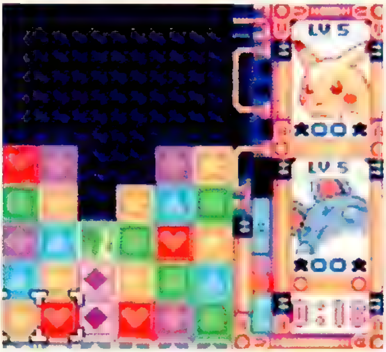


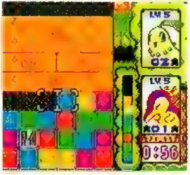


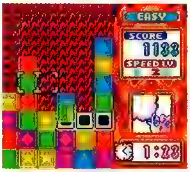


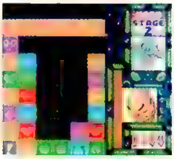
Pokémon Puzzle League

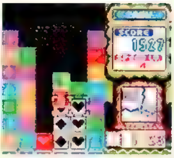
Apparently, **Nintendo** wants to halt all productivity here at the EGM office, and Pokémon Puzzle League is their tool for doing so. Take the über-addictive Tetris Attack and toss in those lovable Pocket Monsters and you've got a game that'll keep us occupied for months. Work will grind to a halt this **February**.

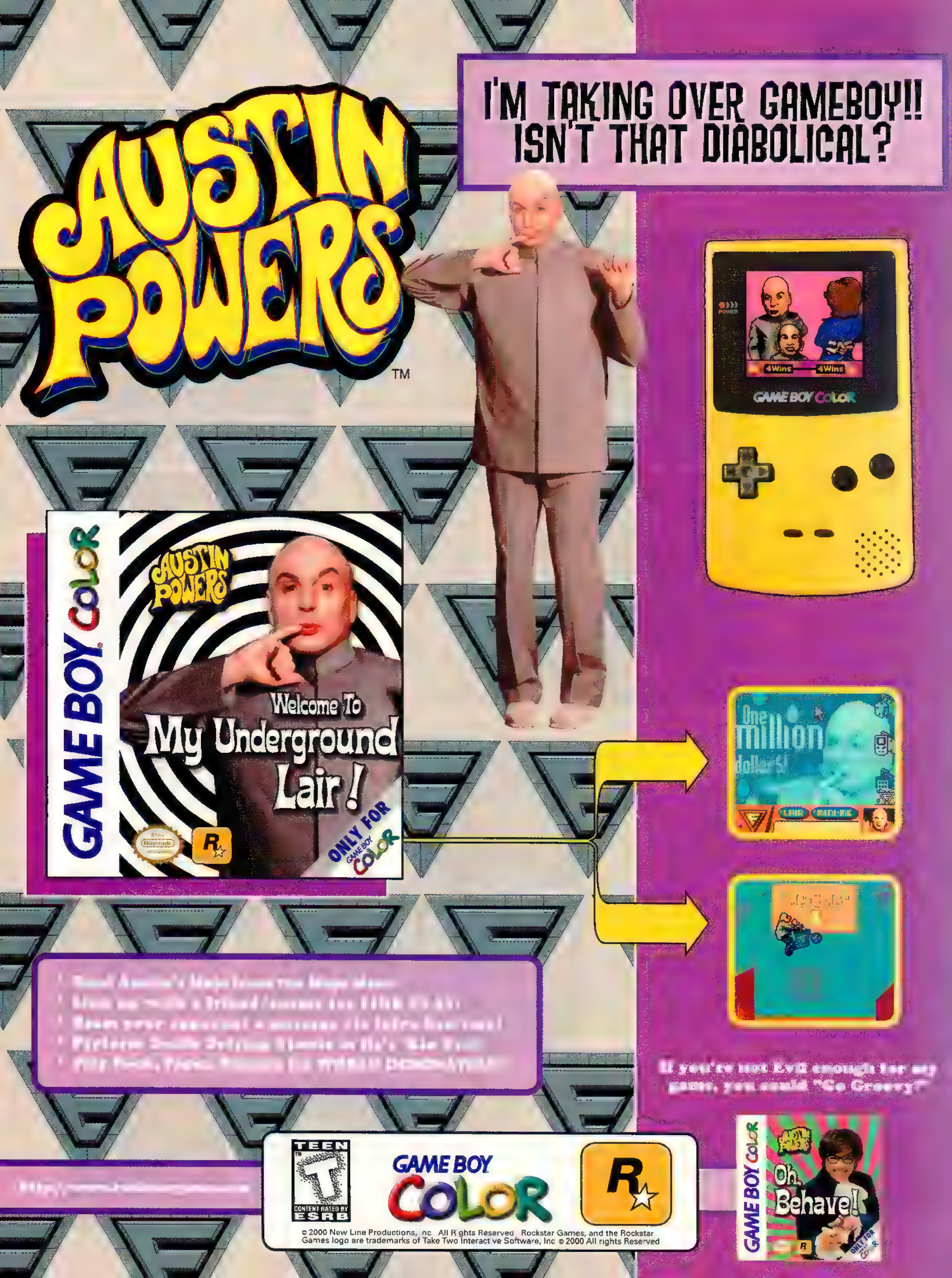








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I'M TAKING OVER GAMEBOY!! ISN'T THAT DIABOLICAL?
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4Wins
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One million dollars!
LAIR
MINI-ME
TEEN
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CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
GAME BOY COLOR
GAME BOY COLOR
AUSTIN POWERS
Oh, Behave!
ONLY FOR GAME BOY COLOR

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- [illegible]

If you're not Evil enough for my game, you could "Go Groovy"

[illegible]

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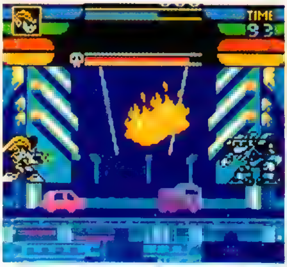
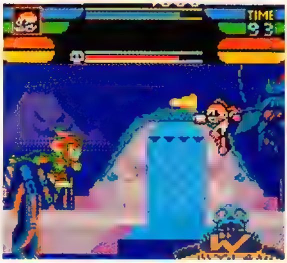
Rockman Battle & Fighters

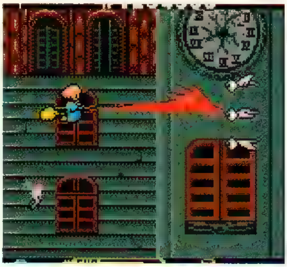
A few years back, Capcom released a series of Mega Man fighting games in the arcades. Consisting of two separate titles, Rockman: The Power Battle and Rockman: The Power Fighters, each ignored the series' platforming routes and featured one-on-one matches between Mega Man and various bosses from earlier games. Now, five years later, NGPC owners are treated to respectable renditions of both on a single cartridge: Rockman Battle & Fighters.

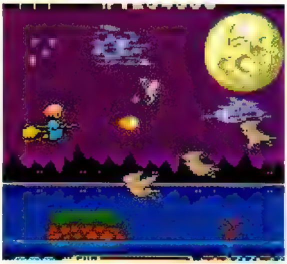




Cotton

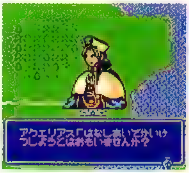
Had the NGPC not gotten the axe, gamers this fall would have earned the privilege of playing one of the most time-honored representatives of the shooter genre. OK, so maybe Cotton isn't exactly R-Type or Gradius. It is, however, a five-level shooter full of cute fairies, ghostly enemies, magical power-ups, and a cantankerous witch. Although "pocketized," all the same bosses, power-ups, and cut-scenes from the PC Engine original remain intact. If you're hungry enough, the Asia market release (out **now**) is in English.





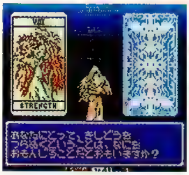
Ogre Battle

One part RPG and two parts strategy, Ogre Battle on the NGPC will always represent the tragedy that is SNK's exit from the American market. Similar to the SNES release (and the more recent N64 game), you assume the role of commander in the King's army, trying to quell a vicious coup. To do so, you must deploy your units from town to town, ridding the countryside of rebel influence. Containing night versus day nuances, public-opinion polls, quirky plot-twists, and the classic turn-based battle system that emphasizes formation and planning, Ogre Battle purports "same great tactics, double the story line." Unfortunately for all you importers out there, the game is strictly in Japanese, no English language option to be found.



アクエリアス「はなしあいでかいけつしようとはおもいませんか？

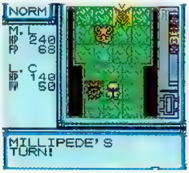
TAROT
TOWER



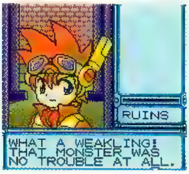
あなたにとって、きしどうをつらぬくということは、なにをおもんじることだとおもいますか？

Evolution

What is the rarest English-language Neo•Geo Pocket release? Give up? Hint: Evolution. The story revolves around Mag, a young adventurer called on to protect the world from the evil 8th Empire. Using his trusty Cyframe weapon, he and his cohorts, Linear and Gre Nade, embark upon a tale rife with turn-based battling and RPG high jinks. Yeah, it's exactly like the somewhat underwhelming Dreamcast series of the same name, but Evolution actually makes quite a good handheld RPG.



MILLIPEDE'S TURN!



WHAT A WEAKLING! THAT MONSTER WAS NO TROUBLE AT ALL.

YOU DEFEND YOUR FAMILY.
YOU DEFEND YOUR HOMELAND.
YOU DEFEND ALL THAT IS GOOD.
BUT FIRST, YOU MUST DEFEND YOURSELF.
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You are the very first dragon slayer, a fearless hero who must combat the most horrific of enemies. You will vanquish evil, marry the heroine, and continue your heroic legacy with each new generation. You will fight as 9 brave characters in 3 action-packed storylines, and battle to prove your worth, your might, your Dragon Valor.

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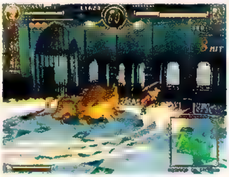
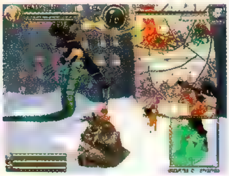
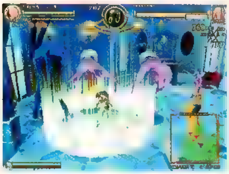
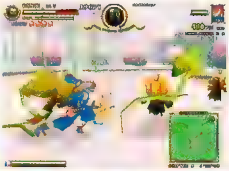
SlashOut

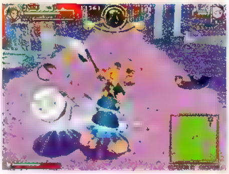
Pseudo-sequel to the **Sega** arcade game SpikeOut, SlashOut takes the same basic idea—up to four-player simultaneous free-roaming fighting, with combos and special moves—and places it into a swords-and-sorcery setting. Gather gems from defeated enemies to gain levels and strengthen your characters. Hopefully this Naomi game, out **now in Japan**, is DC bound (and added network support would be nice!).

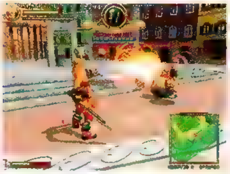


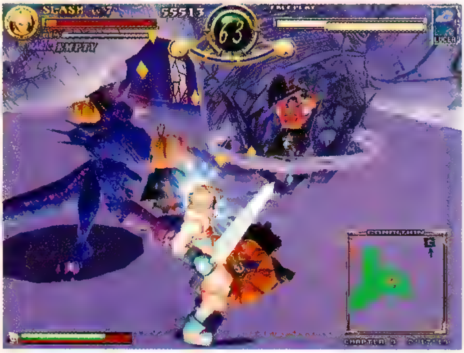






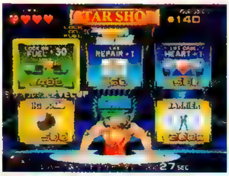


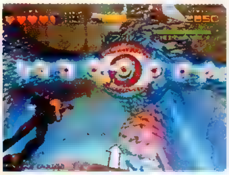


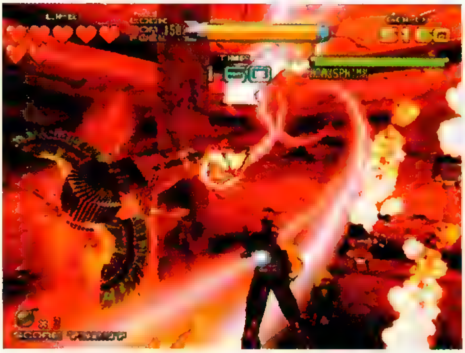


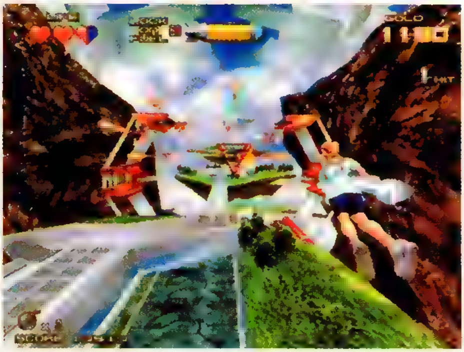
Planet Harriers

Who else has been praying for a Space Harrier follow-up? **Amusement Vision** (formerly Sega AM4) has stepped up to the plate and delivered a two-player simultaneous hybrid of Space Harrier and Fantasy Zone. Choose from four different characters to blast through wave after wave of 3D shooting action. Keep your hit percentage up to make more money and buy better weapons. No word on a U.S. release yet.









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THE ULTIMATE GEAR – PG.214
THE MUST-BUY DVDS – PG.206
THE OLD STUFF – PG.194
THE LAUNCH TITLES – PG.188
THE GOODS – PG.184

THE ULTIMATE PS2 LAUNCH PARTY

THE SIXTH SENSE
BRUCE WILLIS

THE PLAYSTATION 2 IS NEARLY HERE, AND WE'RE READY TO WELCOME IT IN STYLE. WANNA JOIN THE PARTY? WE'LL SHOW YOU EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO GET THE MOST FROM YOUR SYSTEM ON DAY ONE.

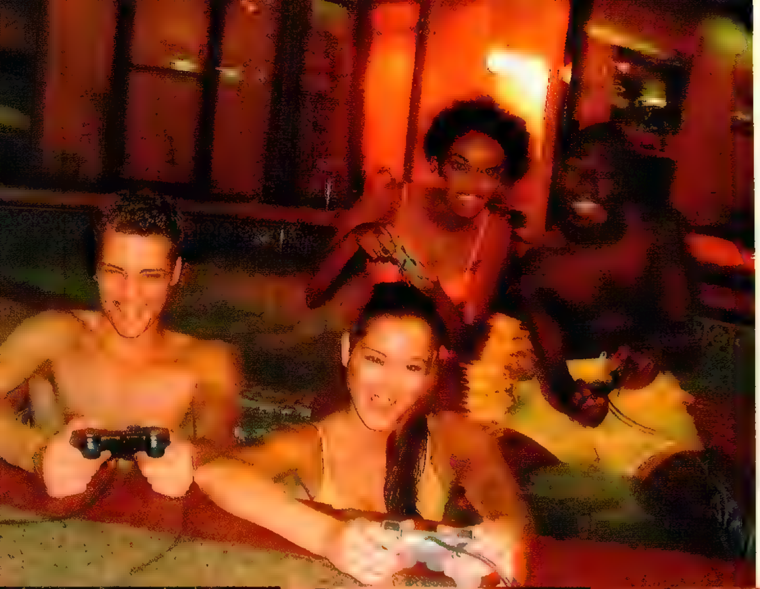
PHOTOGRAPHY BY
RAFAEL FUCHS

“I don't know if you've ever seen a million PlayStation 2s,” Kaz Hirai, chief operating officer of Sony Computer Entertainment America (SCEA), says. “The most I've seen at once was 50,000 in a huge warehouse, and it's unbelievable how much space that takes. The logistics of moving a million units for launch day—I'm not going to say it's as difficult as launching the space shuttle, but it's pretty close.”

Something tells us Sony will figure out the logistics just fine. Regardless, it ain't our problem. We got a launch party to throw. And when Sony's first batch of 1 million PlayStation 2 units hit U.S. stores on Thursday, Oct. 26, we reckon we won't be the only gamers phoning in sick and calling over pals to play with the most powerful, most stylish, most “midnight-black” game console on the market. Without a doubt, the PS2's launch will mark the biggest 24-hour event the games industry has ever seen. If our math is right, you'll have more than 20 games to choose from on day one—not to mention thousands of DVD flicks.

It's almost too much digital entertainment to absorb in one day.

Relax—we're here to help. Within this massive article, you'll find a complete guide to the first round of PS2 games and peripherals, an in-depth look at Sony's gameplan, and smaller articles written by experts on DVDs and the audio/visual components that'll squeeze the most out of your new system. In short, you'll find everything



Sure, you can throw your PS2 shindig in any number of lame locations—your bedroom, your auntie's basement, that vacant lot behind the 7-11. But why not get creative? We gathered our gear and headed to the Sybaris in Northbrook, Ill. Its plush, pool-equipped rooms are usually reserved for couples who, er, come to get their game on. But we thought the moody lighting, tricked-out A/V system and slight risk of electrocution (don't place your PS2 by an indoor pool, kids) would make for the hippest party palace in the Midwest. So pick your party locale accordingly—this is only going to be the biggest system launch of all time.

you need to get your PS2 launch party off the ground. (Our only warning: You'll need to supply your own models and posh, pool-equipped party palace.) Or, at the very least, this feature will help you decide if you want to ignore the whole shabang and wait for Xbox and Gamecube.

But before you even think of getting this soiree started, don't forget the most crucial step of all: nabbing a PS2. Now that's not going to be easy if you didn't preorder a system. Game stores Babbage's, Electronics Boutique and Funcoland are still taking preorders, but at this point it's too late to get in on the initial launch-day shipment of 1 million systems. They're pretty much spoken for (unless you hop in line—see sidebar). So how long will you have to wait if you miss the system on day one? Sony is planning to release another 2 million consoles in the U.S. by the end of its fiscal year in March—and we're told these systems will hit sooner rather than later. "The important thing really is for us to take those remaining 2 million units after launch and frontload them as much as possible before the holiday season," Hirai says. "We're trying to meet the pre-holiday and holiday demand as much as possible."

One thing you won't have to worry about on Oct. 26 is a lack of games. As of press time, 40 titles are set to hit the PS2 at launch or within a month after. And Sony hasn't even announced its lineup of first-party launch games yet. You'll find a complete guide to all these titles later in the feature. But beyond its record-breaking debut, is the PS2 really guaranteed a lifetime of supply of titles from the big-name developers and publishers? While the obvious answer might seem to be "of course!" consider this: Both Microsoft and Nintendo have more powerful consoles on the way next year—and some publishers have confided that Microsoft is easier to work with than Sony. What's to keep publishers from jumping Sony's ship? "We're making sure, first and foremost, that we have a successful launch so we can grow the installed base of the hardware as quickly as possible," says Hirai, "because at the end of the day, when you have a large installed base, that's a bigger business opportunity for all the companies that publish on that platform. And we have a five-year track record now of developing and nurturing our relationships with the third-party publishers, through co-promotions, co-marketing and lots of interesting things to support the platform and their titles as well."

In other words, Sony's saying that if they throw the biggest party in town, everybody'll wanna come. Simple as that. In fact, Hirai says he isn't even sweating the other guys right now. "The truth is our biggest competition is not necessarily traditional competitors like Nintendo, Sega and Microsoft," he tells us. "We're really trying to offer a compelling entertainment experience so that people will play the PlayStation 2 as opposed to seeing a movie or going out to play pool with their friends. Any type of entertainment, really, is our competition."

PS2 QUEST

Whazzat? You say you didn't preorder a PlayStation 2? Then surely you're s' out of l', right? Wrong. As of press time, these stores and Web sites haven't begun PS2 pre-order programs. They may be your best bet for nabbing a system this October. Just be sure to check in with them early and often.

- Best Buy
- Circuit City
- Wal-Mart
- www.ncsx.com
- www.buygames.com
- The JC Penney Catalog
- CompUSA
- Target

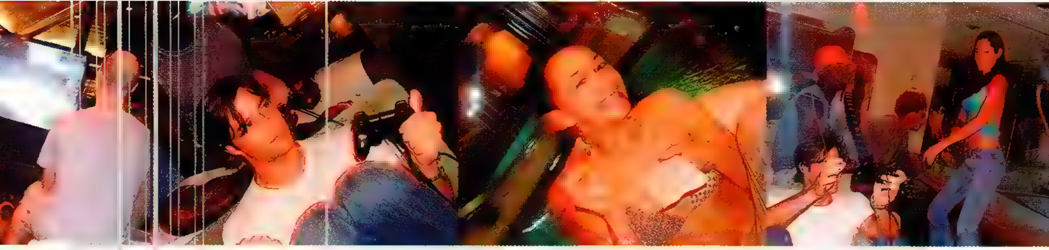
THE BEST THIRD-PARTY TOYS FOR YOUR PS2

PARTY FAVORS

AUDIOSTORM PST SPEAKERS

Price: $300
www.galantcom.com

These PS2-styled speakers are the perfect choice for pumping sound out of your new system. Not only does the set include a remote, five mini-satellites and a subwoofer, it comes with a Dolby Digital 5.1 amp. Not quite as fancy as the components listed elsewhere in this feature, but still a solid setup for the price.



Bold words, sure, but we don't doubt Sony has the brand recognition, marketing muscle and vast library of games to get what it wants. So the only big question left is, what's next? Hirai offers no new details on the PS2's broadband network, which will launch next year along with the hard-drive/ethernet-port peripheral. We know Sony is lining up partners now to provide digital movies and music for the network, as well as episodic games, dynamic in-game advertising and other broadband applications—all in addition to traditional online gaming and Web browsing.

But a year is a long time to wait in this industry. Sega, meanwhile, is kicking off its own online-gaming revolution with SegaNet—while Sega officials point their fingers at Sony and say the PS2 is jumping the gun by going straight to broadband connectivity. "We've heard a lot of people say, 'Why don't you start with a conventional modem and then move up to broadband?'" Hirai says. "But we don't want to dilute the picture by offering something we don't think is truly compelling in terms of the infrastructure. And with the PlayStation 2, we may be able to accelerate the deployment of broadband connectivity because of the types of entertainment we'll have to offer. Hopefully people will start calling their cable companies to say, 'When is cable-modem connectivity or DSL coming to my neighborhood?'"

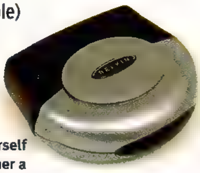
No doubt about it—Sony is cocky. But then, with more than 70 million PlayStations sold worldwide, they have every right to be. Even now on the brink of the bloodiest console war in gaming history, the company has no intention of changing its gameplan or softening its policies with third-party publishers. "I think one of the reasons we've been successful is that we've always stayed true to our vision," Hirai tells us, "and our support for broadband is a good example of that. And did I mention backward compatibility? How many reasons for the PS2's success do you want here?"

That's plenty for now. We're excited. Let's get this party started.

PARTY FAVORS

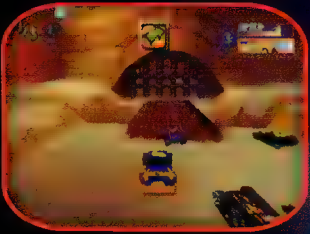
FIREWIRE AND HUB

Price: $60 (hub), $30 (cable)
www.belkin.com



Like the link cable on the PS but a hundred times faster, FirewWire cables allow you to join two PS2s in unholy matrimony. Nicer still, get yourself a FireWire hub and slap together a bunch of PS2s for multiplayer high jinks. Unreal Tournament is the first game to support the FireWire.

Crash & Bash
your way through
eight hazard-filled
environments



Supercharge
your vehicle
with a turbo injection
of high-speed energy

Play Off-Road
bumper cars
with split-screen
head-to-head racing

Smoke
your opponent
in Battle Mode.
One of five hair-raising
modes of play

PlayStation

MATTEL INTERACTIVE

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Mild Animated Violence

Tyco® R/C Speed Wrench™ vehicle also available.
Sold separately. Batteries not included.

Tyco...That's How You Spell R/C™

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Flip off your Friends
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TYCO R/C
ASSAULT BATTERY
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www.tycorc.com
ASSAULT WITH A BATTERY
For the PlayStation game console

SSX
Limits No Rules

ssx.ea.com
LAUNCHING
October 2000
for PLAYSTATION®2
computer entertainment system
EA SPORTS BIG™
PlayStation®2
RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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THE GOODS

Here they are: all the basic ingredients for your launch party (well, except for the models and massage oils). But you might need to cash in your college fund to get every one of the first-party peripherals due on Oct. 2[illegible]

VERTICAL STAND

MSRP: $15

Standing the PS2 on its side is a great way to save space in your entertainment center, but you better splurge on this handy stand before drunken partygoers tip over your machine.

SONY PLAYSTATION 2

MSRP: $299

The party machine itself doesn't look much different from the Japanese model that launched in March—at least from the front. Its rear end, however, features a hollowed-out bay, covered by a plastic hatch, in place of the PC card slot on the Japanese model. It's here that you'll plug in the hard-drive/ethernet adapter S[illegible] the U.S. machine has the same USB and Firewire ports as the Japanese system, as well as the same component video and optical out sockets for gamers with high-end TVs and audio gear (check out the end of this feature for more info). The PS2 comes with composite video cables (the RF adapter and S-Video and component-video cables are sold separately), one Dual Shock 2 joypad and that's pretty much it. Unfortunately, a memory card is not included. On the bright side, you don't need to insert a card loaded with DVD drivers to play movies like you did on the Japanese system. The drivers come built into the U.S. PlayStation 2. Just pop in a movi[illegible] party dies down and [illegible]

DUAL SHOCK 2

MSRP: $34

This here's [illegible] to play multiplayer games, you need at least another Dual Shock 2 controller. We just wish more of the launch games made use of the analog buttons. Don't forget that you can use controllers from the original PlayStation to play PS2 games.

MEMORY CARD

MSRP: $3[illegible]

[illegible] the PS1 one [illegible] bit [illegible] but don't forget that this 8-Megabyte [illegible] packs [illegible] times the storage capacity of the original PlayStation card. Keep in mind that you can't use PS1 memory cards with PS2 games, either (they work just fine with PS1 games, though).

PS2 MULTITAP

MSRP: $34

You really only need this thing for two launch games—Madden NFL 2001 and TimeSplitters. You can't have a proper launch party without these titles (and you can't use the PS1 multitap with PS2 games), so you'd better splurge.

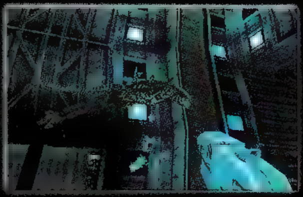
DON'T BE AFRAID OF
THE DARK.

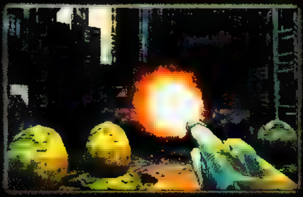
BE AFRAID OF
WHAT'S IN IT.

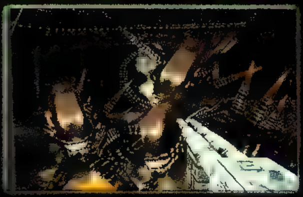
"Alien Resurrection is the most technically superb game available on the PlayStation"
PSExtreme

"Compelling gameplay and genuine tension set Alien Resurrection above all other FPS games."
Gamers Republic

ALIEN
RESURRECTION







WWW.FOXINTERACTIVE.COM

PlayStation

FOX INTERACTIVE

MATURE M
Animated Blood and Gore
Animated Violence
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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From the option attack and wing T formations, to the fight songs and crowd chants of 115 Division I-A teams, we've captured
PlayStation
NCAA
EVERYONE
E

The "Officially Licensed Collegiate Products" label is the exclusive property of the The Collegiate Licensing
icons, and mascots associated with the NCAA, universities, bowls, and conference are the exclusive property of
America Inc. Developed by Red Zone Interactive, Inc. PlayStation and the PlayStation logos are registered

the rivalry and spirit of college football. It'll get in your head and stay there.

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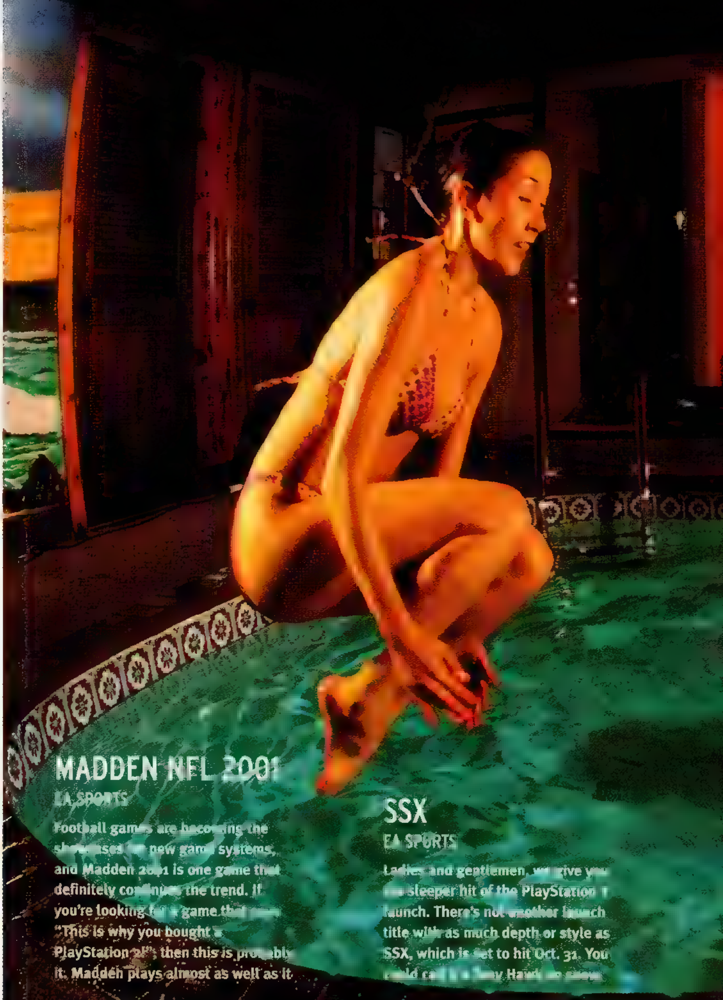
PlayStation
NCAA GAMEBREAKER 2001
E
NCAA
989 SPORTS

THE LAUNCH TITLES

FIVE LAUNCH GAMES YOU MUST BUY

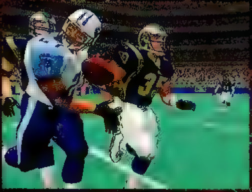
We locked ourselves in our party room with the PS2, a big-screen TV and all the launch titles we could get our hands on. When we emerged days later, shaken and stained, we declared these five games the ultimate showpiece titles for your spiffy new system. Bust out your credit cards—you'll want to nab all five of these games within the first week of the PS2's splashdown...



MADDEN NFL 2001

EA SPORTS

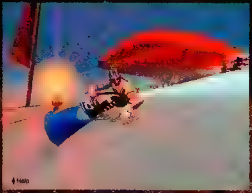
Football games are becoming the showcases for new game systems, and Madden 2001 is one game that definitely continues the trend. If you're looking for a game that says "This is why you bought a PlayStation 2!", then this is probably it. Madden plays almost as well as it looks, and compared to a lot of the PS2 launch games, this one looks like a supermodel. You wouldn't deny yourself bringing home the Cindy Crawford of video games, would you?



SSX

EA SPORTS

Ladies and gentlemen, we give you the sleeper hit of the PlayStation 2 launch. There's not another launch title with as much depth or style as SSX, which is set to hit Oct. 31. You could call it a Tony Hawk on snow, but it's really so much more than that. Tricking out every character and unlocking all this game's secrets will take the average player months to do...but what a blast! SSX should leave the store with you when you pick up a PS2.



PS2: BY THE NUMBERS

100,000

Number of PlayStations Sony shipped when that system launched in 1995

1 MILLION

Number of PS2s Sony is shipping for the U.S. launch

RIDGE RACER V

NAMCO

Those looking for a pure arcade racing experience simply can't do better than Ridge Racer V. Namco's been ripping up the racing ranks for a long time, and [illegible] like the consummation of everything they've learned. Nothing comes close in terms of speed, graphics, sound or control this October. [illegible] you [illegible] the first Ridge Racer with your original PlayStation, and RRV definitely makes it worth continuing that tradition.

SMUGGLER'S RUN

ROCKSTAR GAMES

Another surprise. Rockstar isn't usually the first place you'd look for a must-have launch title, but Smuggler's Run is a combination of everything that made Driver and Crazy Taxi great. You've never seen environments this huge before, either. Follow mission objectives or just drive around breaking stuff and running over cows. No matter how you decide to play, Smuggler's Run is gobs of fun for everyone.

TIMESPLITTERS

EIDOS

When it came time to pick the final must-buy launch game, we got into a heated debate. Half the staff wanted this excellent first-person shooter. The other half wanted the glorious twitchfest Silpheed: The Lost Planet. Both games have an excellent pedigree (TimeSplitters was developed by the guys who made GoldenEye; Treasure made Silpheed). But in the end, we went with TimeSplitters: it's fast, fun, silky-smooth (even with four players) and packs an incredible level editor. Just be sure to nab a multitap.

AND THE REST...

Just as with the launch of the Dreamcast, the PS2 is set to make its U.S. debut with dozens of games hitting within the first month. And as with the DC's launch, we expect many of these titles will slip past their release dates. We don't mean to spoil your party—that's just the way things go as Sony and the third-party publishers jostle their lineups so everything doesn't hit at once. Nevertheless, we've assembled this all-inclusive list of "launch window" games that, as of press time, are confirmed to hit stores between now and the end of November. Note that games with black titles are set to hit on or even before launch day.

JET ION GRAND PRIX — Crave

No WipeOut? No problem? This game has the looks and depth to suit your futuristic racing needs, but the lack of a two-player mode is something that could send this racer crashing into the wall.

SWING AWAY GOLF — EA Sports

Fans of the Hot Shot Golf games will feel right at home with this easy-to-learn title. Think of it as Hot Shots Lite.

READY 2 RUMBLE ROUND 2 — Midway

In this sequel you get to pound the tar out of Michael Jackson and Shaquille O'Neal—what more could you possibly ask for. Indiana Pacers fans should especially love it.

ESPN WINTER X GAMES SNOWBOARDING — Konami

Just in time for the Olympics, Konami's ESPN-licensed sportster looks incredible, and should provide fans of button-mashing tactics plenty of action. Check this one out if you need that thumb-busting sensation only T&F can provide.

ESPN INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD — Konami

The classic Track & Field rapid-tap gameplay hits the PS2. You get more than 12 events, including the 100-meter dash, long jump, weightlifting, gymnastics and skeet shooting. Heck, even the world's fastest man, gold medalist Maurice Greene, endorsed this thing.

SILENT SCOPE — Konami

Grab a sniper rifle in the home version of Konami's latest quarter-cruncher to rescue the president's daughter from kidnappers.

WILD WILD RACING — Interplay

True to its name, this game packs some truly inspired racing modes and a freaked-out physics model that'll have you rolling and bouncing all over the mountainous courses.

GUN GRIFFON BLAZE — Working Designs

A surprise entry from Working Designs, it should satiate all the hardcore types out there who long for big mechs and even bigger explosions.

SILPHEED: THE LOST PLANET — Working Designs

Developed by Treasure (a name shooter fans worship), this one didn't make our top five only because we hadn't played it by press time.

X-SQUAD — EA

If you like 3D shooters or B-Movie action flicks on Cinemax, you should like this game, which borrows from each.

KESSEN — EA

Go back to a time when feudal lords solved their problems on the battlefield. Orchestrate epic battles to become ruler of the free world.

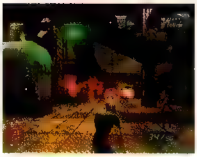
THEME PARK ROLLER COASTER — EA

Design and build 12 different coasters across eight levels, then fill the rest of your park with sideshows and other rides. Don't forget bathrooms.

ORPHEN — Activision

This action/RPG based on a Japanese anime boasts plenty of platform jumping, dungeon exploration and semi-turn-based fighting.

SWING AWAY GOLF



X-SQUAD

ESPN INTERNATIONAL TRACK & FIELD

SILENT SCOPE

KESSEN

PARTY FAVORS

USB MOUSE

Price: $30
www.logitech.com
www.microsoft.com

Some PS2 games in Japan already support a USB mouse, and there's talk of Unreal Tournament supporting it when it comes out in the U.S. Any old USB mouse will do, but we suggest going with a two-button USB wheel mouse from Logitech or Microsoft.

CAMBRIDGE SOUNDWORKS
FOURPOINTSURROUND

[FourPointSurround™ FPS2000 Digital]

Gaming With These Speakers Is Almost Like Cheating

With the FourPointSurround™ FPS2000 Digital speakers, winning is within your power. You will hear your enemy sneaking towards you from any direction. The FourPointSurround™ FPS2000 Digital speakers surround you with razor-sharp sound clarity, power for the most intense gaming, and bass that will kick you in the chest. If that's too much to handle, the FourPointSurround™ FPS1800 or the FourPointSurround™ FPS1500 speakers deliver true-to-life surround sound that no real gamer should be without.

You can still choose to "play by the book" - just don't come whining to us when you lose.

CAMBRIDGE SOUNDWORKS
FOURPOINTSURROUND
FPS1500
CAMBRIDGE SOUNDWORKS
FOURPOINTSURROUND
FPS1800
CAMBRIDGE SOUNDWORKS
FOURPOINTSURROUND
FPS2000 Digital

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CREATIVE

PERSONAL DIGITAL ENTERTAINMENT
Starts Here.

PARTY FAVORS

INTERACT GAMESHARK

Price: $50
www.gameshark.com

InterAct will release a PS2-specific version of their popular cheat-generating software, but not until after the system's European release on Nov. 24. Like the newest GameShark CDX for the PlayStation, the PS2 version will come in CD form.

ETERNAL RING
Agetec

This action-RPG looks nice, but it doesn't offer much more than the original King's Field in the gameplay department.

ARMORED CORE 2
Agetec

Huge mechs, heavy combat and beautiful graphics collide in this new installment of the popular PlayStation series.

MIDNIGHT CLUB
Rockstar

Rockstar's other launch game. Picture Smuggler's Run in New York...kinda. It might miss the launch window by a few days.

EVERGRACE
Agetec

Developed by the lads who made King's Field, Evergrace is another action-RPG that's heavy on swordplay and light on puzzles.

STUNT GP
Titus

Can't find a sim-racing launch game that revs your throttle? Try Stunt GP, in which you string together stunts for big combo points.

TEKKEN TAG TOURNAMENT
Namco

Got Tekken? Namco serves up a sequel with the benefit of tag battles, a bowling mini-game and some amazing-looking graphics.

DYNASTY WARRIORS 2
Koei

Throw thousands of enemies on a feudal battlefield against you, a warrior with a bloodthirsty sword, and you've got a carnage-fest.

ICO
SCEA

This high-minded puzzle-adventure game is an ambitious attempt to tell a story about a boy trying to rescue a princess by using extremely detailed visuals instead of voice-overs or text.

STREET FIGHTER EX3
Capcom

It ain't a very impressive-looking PS2 game, but SFEX3's cast of 20 fighters and classic EX play provide an old-school alternative to Tekken Tag Tournament.

DEAD OR ALIVE 2: HARDCORE
Tecmo

Multiple-tiered stages, tons of secrets and even more characters. DOA2 Hardcore takes it to Tekken Tag Tournament and delivers a sucker-punch. Super-fast tag-battle action at your fingertips.

FANTAVISION
SCEA

An addictive and fun puzzle game where you connect the colors of fireworks and set them off to create a brilliant virtual light show.

SUMMONER
THQ

Role-playing fans will find much to love about Summoner, one of the most dazzling titles in the launch window.

RC REVENGE PRO
Acclaim

If this game plays as well as the PS version, and looks this good, it may be a sleeper hit.

GRADIUS III & IV
Konami

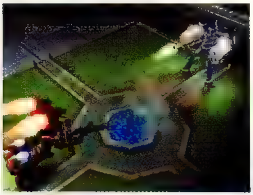
Konami's Gradius series is the granddaddy of horizontally scrolling shooters, and these are the latest two games in the series on one disc.

SUMMONER

EVERGRACE

DYNASTY WARRIORS 2

ETERNAL RING


ARMORED CORE 2

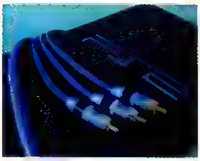
DEAD OR ALIVE 2: HARDCORE

PARTY FAVORS

MONSTER CABLES

Price: $30-50
www.monstercables.com

You've just spent $300 on a sophisticated game machine that doubles as a piece of hi-tech A/V equipment. So it only makes sense you get ahold of the best cables money can buy—namely, standard A/V, S-video and component Monster Cables specifically designed for the PS2.

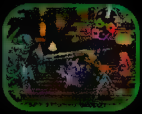


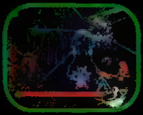
The battle begins when life ends.

Ragnarok, the apocalypse, is approaching. Your ultimate purpose will transcend life itself. From the creators of 'STAR OCEAN: The Second Story' comes Valkyrie Profile™, a stunningly beautiful RPG adventure with a story like none before.

Your mettle will be tested as you face tormenting decisions involving powerful issues of love, death and revenge. Destiny hinges on your choices, and your ability to recruit and train the souls of fallen warriors for a war between the gods.

Heed the call. And find out why death is only the beginning.





PlayStation
VALKYRIE PROFILE
TEEN
ENIX

ENIX
www.enix.com

PlayStation

TEEN
Mild Animated Violence
Mild Language
Suggestive Themes
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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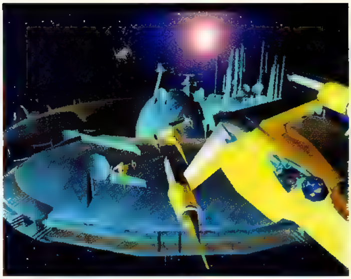
Number of PS2 titles that Sony promises we'll see in the U.S. by April 1, 2001

THE BOUNCER



STAR WARS EPISODE 1: STARFIGHTER

NHL 2001

EA Sports

This is looking as good as Madden NFL 2001, and even better in some ways. There's nothing like being able to see the player's expressions of joy—after he's punched someone's teeth out.

ESPN NFL PRIMETIME

Konami

Sick of coma-inducing Madden and Summerall commentating on your football game? Maybe it's time to give Chris Berman and Tom Jackson a shot in ESPN's first NFL video game.

ESPN NBA TONIGHT

Konami

After floating between the PS and PC for a few years, this game is finally going to bring Stuart Scott into your living room.

THE BOUNCER

Square EA

Square has yet to put a game under the graphics, kind of like William Shatner and toupees, but the screens still look delicious. So here's hoping Dream Factory gets the gameplay down. It could be ground-breaking.

F1 CHAMPIONSHIP

Ubi Soft

One of three F1 games slated to come out on the PS2, Ubi Soft continues their critically acclaimed series on the powerful new hardware.

RAYMAN 2

Ubi Soft

If you haven't played this fun 3D adventure game on the N64, Dreamcast, PlayStation or Game Boy Color, well, here's your big chance.

STAR WARS EPISODE 1: STARFIGHTER

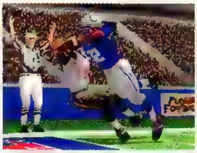
LucasArts

We wanted to include this incredible flight-combat shooter as one of our five must-buy launch games, but unfortunately it doesn't come out until the end of November.

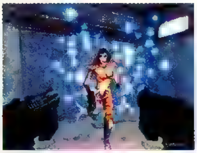
UNREAL TOURNAMENT

Infogrames

No Internet play, but a four-player split-screen should make up for that. It's running fast and since Quake III won't be out until much later, UT is the only other frag-fest besides Time Splitters.



ESPN NFL PRIME TIME



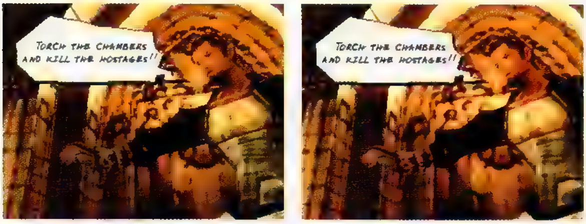
UNREAL TOURNAMENT

GO RETRO...

Amidst all the hubbub and hot new games of your PS2 launch party, it's easy to forget one of the system's coolest features: backward compatibility. But remember, the PS2 not only plays PS1 games, it enhances them, too. Switch on the "smoothing" option and the PS2 filters the textures on all the polygonal models in your games. In other words, pop in something with a lot of real-time visuals—Dino Crisis or Medal of Honor—and everything becomes cleaner and much less pixelated (you'll especially see an improvement in games that show detailed textures up close). You won't notice any difference in games filled with prerendered stuff, like the environments in Resident Evil or Final Fantasy VIII (only the polygonal characters in those games will benefit from smoothing). If you want to see this effect in its full glory, we suggest you pick Vandal Hearts, Metal Gear Solid, PaRappa the Rapper, Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2—anything with large textures.

The PS2 also gives you the option to speed up the loading times of PS1 games. Most titles we tried loaded about a third faster with fast loading turned on. But this feature only seemed to improve load times within the game (say, between rounds or levels); it didn't actually speed up a title's initial boot time. Also, fast loading can mess up the visuals in games designed to constantly stream data from the disc.

But before you decide to break out your PS classics and add a retro twist to your party, you need to keep a few things in mind. You can't use your PS2 memory card to save PS1 games; you need to use a PS1 card (so don't go throwing all yours away). You can use regular PS joypads and Dual Shocks with the PS2, but only with games that don't make use of the Dual Shock 2's analog buttons. Finally, you can't use your PS multitap for PS2 games; you'll need to buy the new PS2 multitap.


TORCH THE CHAMBERS AND KILL THE HOSTAGES!!
TORCH THE CHAMBERS AND KILL THE HOSTAGES!!

Square's Vagrant Story looks fine without any fancy hardware tricks (top)—but switch on the PS2's smoothing option and it looks even prettier (right).

FORCED FEEDBACK

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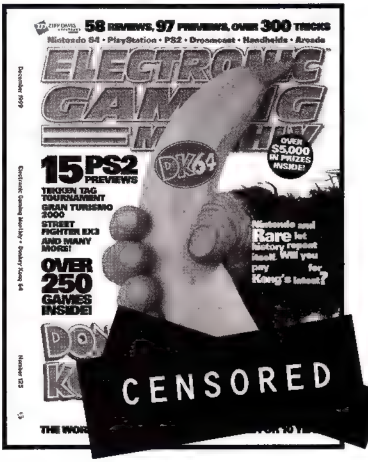
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Number 125
CENSORED

Believe it or not, this early concept for the Donkey Kong 64 cover (EGM December 1999, Issue #125) wasn't approved by the powers that be at Ziff-Davis...nor by anyone other than looney EGM editors. Perhaps it had something to do with the way the ape's hand was gripping the shaft of the rather large banana. Or maybe it was the placement of the hairy coconuts near the base of the shaft. Whatever it was, this early concept never saw the light of day. It's too bad, really. Stay tuned for other covers that never quite made it to the newsstands.

EGM'S COLLECTION OF MAIL FROM INMATES KEEPS GROWING

We've always felt we had something special going on here in the pages of EGM, but perhaps we didn't realize the impact we make month after month on those less fortunate than ourselves—namely, gamers who are in prison. Time and time again, we receive letters from inmates asking for tips or cheats for a game, or others simply saying hello and thanking us for giving so much gaming info in every issue. And still other times we receive strange scrawls from inmates who go on and on about things we would rather not hear about (some addressed to specific editors), or some sort of body hair that we hope wasn't intentionally placed in the envelope. Whatever the case, thanks to all of you inmates who keep reading EGM. One question though: Is it true you can't play video games in prison?

VIDEO GAME STARS BAND TOGETHER

Not long ago, realistic face-mapping was a mere dream of developers. Now it's commonplace— although, not everyone is happy about its current state. Recently, a group of stars from a variety of popular video games held a press conference to voice concern and disgust over the quality of face-mapping textures used on their polygonal characters in games.

"It's ridiculous, and I shan't stand for it any longer," declared Bruce Willis, star of Neversoft's Apocalypse. "I sounded like myself, but I looked like someone wearing a Bruce Willis mask."

True, most sports and movie stars represented as characters in games seldom express true facial expression and emotion. Instead, they often just stand there with a blank stare and a pasted-on smile, bouncing slightly. Worse still, most of the time if a star's voice is used in the game, the polygon version's mouth doesn't even move.

One star who would rather go unnamed explained how eerie it is to see himself in a game. "I look like an emotionless corpse." A supposed World War II veteran at the rally was particularly disturbed with the lack of detail in the faces of Allied and Nazi soldiers in DreamWorks' PlayStation first-person shooter Medal of Honor. Strangely, this man admitted not being directly involved with the project in any way, later became deranged and had to be detained by animal control.

Hopefully, new and upcoming technology in systems like the Dreamcast, PlayStation 2 and X-Box will allow for more realistic representations of video game stars.

(N)INTENDO FINALLY GROWS UP

In an attempt to show gamers of the world they no longer cater to a strictly kiddie audience, Intendo plans to release two blood and feces-soaked M-rated games and one other rather unique title on its whimsically code-named Flipper system (other name rumors include StarFun, Uncle Jimmie's Super Fun-Time Machine and FunBox 642). A hunting simulator starring Flanjo from Flanjo-Kablooie fame is the first "adult" game for the upcoming powerhouse. Instead of hunting for salmon, fruits or berries, you control Flanjo, searching for unarmed campers who leave food outside of their tent. After rummaging through the trash, you earn points for tearing these campers from limb to limb as they sleep. Extra points are awarded for slaughtering children.

The next game, another type of murder simulator, puts you in control of Intendo-star Mariccio. As a hitman for the mob, your job is to take out key people from rival gangster families. Points are awarded for accuracy and blood splatter. In a strange twist to an otherwise realistic title, Mariccio is accompanied by his coked-up dinosaur pal Yocci on a number of jobs. Hilarity ensues.

The final game in the lineup is a shuffle board simulator geared to older gamers—those 55 years old and above. Taking full advantage of the system's graphical capabilities, Shuffle Board 642 is sure to be one of the most impressive additions to the new system's growing library. "We realize there is a segment of the gaming public out there who happens to be really old," says an Intendo spokesperson, "and they want to play games created specifically for them." Although details are still sketchy, there is talk of an adult diaper add-on from a third-party peripheral manufacturer. "We're taking so-called adult games to a whole new realm."

HOT & NOT

@ EGM

The EGM Hot & Not list—a place where you can get an inside look at what the staff of EGM likes and dislikes. The list contains general and specific items, concepts, games, people and more. Note: Particular entries may or may not coincide with the opinions of particular staffers. Send yours to **shawn_smith@ziffdavis.com**

- **Seganet**
- **PS2**
- **Madden NFL 2001 PS2**
- **Survivor Finale**
- **Survivor II**
- **5-lion Voltron**

- **Virtua Tennis ads**
- **Big Brother**
- **Censorship of D2**
- **Shawn going back to school**
- **Canada (in the winter)**
- **Trailer-park Voltron**

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As you may or may not know, we get a lot of cool items from the companies we deal with on a regular basis. And yes, we do appreciate them, but all too often after looking at them for a while they end up sitting in somebody's cubicle or getting stored in a cabinet. Stuff like hats, shirts, pens, pieces of plastic, toys, games and other such things. So we thought, "Let's pass some of this fodder on to our readers, instead of just having it lay around." After all, better you enjoy this stuff than us. Like last month, read the instructions below, send in a postcard and you might just be picked as the winner! This doesn't cost you anything—**it's as simple as sending in a three-inch by five-inch postcard with your name, address and phone number on it to the address below.** We'll then pick one winner in a few weeks, and send out the goods.

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WEB SITES

PHATTER THAN FAT

Thank you to all who continue to send us sites. We love checking them out more than we love G.I. Joe and Cobra T-shirts. As usual, here are all kinds of sites: Weird, gaming-related, zany, funny, cool, stupid and so on and so forth. Send Web site submissions to **shawn_smith@ziffdavis.com**

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A WORD FROM ESAK

Hello, gaming friends. It has been some time since we last spoke, but I am back for now. I was in my home country of Turkey most of the time, training with Mahir and generally having good times. Did somebody say homemade wine? I know I just did. I am here today to talk about video game violence. I ask you, who cares? There are children starving in many places and people do not mention this. What about the nuclear bombs in hidden shelters around the world? Instead, strong United States politicians mention the Mortal Kombat and the gun shooting. I heard on TV something about murder simulators. What does this mean? I am no genius of learning, but I do know what is not wrong and what is more than wrong and violent video games are not the problem. Maybe the parents of these children should sit down and have a time of playing. Then they might realize these games aren't so bad. Or if they are bad, tell the children NO, NO, NO. Take for a moment, wrestling games. I am a star of many wrestling games (mostly in Europe). I know there are times when I might hurt someone on the video game, but I know it is fake. When I am in the ring, that is real. More real than any of you could ever imagine. People should know this. In Turkey, there is no problem. Granted, we have no electricity most of the time to play video games...but that's no matter. Keep an open mind. And also, before I go I am trying to get citizenship to USA but am having some trouble. Sorry about the politician comment I mention. That is just for a joke. Until next time, Esak.

PARTY POOPERS

THE DARK SIDE OF PS2

262 Confirmed third-party PS2 games in development with scheduled release dates

Ever since SCEA first released PlayStation 2 development kits to game studios in summer 1999 — back when the prototype unit was just a bunch of wires and a green box that could be destroyed if you turned on the power supplies in the wrong order — we've heard unhappy grumblings about hardware. Chief among the complaints: The system's funky architecture is a bitch to work with, only the biggest development houses have the resources to [illegible], and there's not enough video RAM.

And when the PS2 finally did launch in Japan last March, the complaints didn't screech to a halt. This time, it was gamers and the gaming press who did all the bitchin'. "Why do the launch games look so damn jaggie?" you asked. "Why aren't the games selling so well in Japan?" we wondered.

Now it's time to address these gripes. After all, even a few major flaws with the system could spoil your launch party faster than week-old bean dip (or, in our case, a drowned model clogging up the pool filter). So here's a point-by-point analysis of the PS2's alleged failings.

▶ Potential pooper # 1: Game sales in Japan have been low in relation to the number of PlayStation 2 units that have been sold.

There's no denying that the PlayStation 2 is a huge hit in Japan, where more than 2 million units have sold since the March launch. But Sony's competition is saying, "So what?" The only reason the PS2 made a big splash, they claim, is because Japanese consumers are buying the system just for its DVD playback capabilities. Paltry sales for many Japanese PS2 titles support that theory.

But SCEA's Kaz Hirai says the U.S. launch will be a different story altogether. "In March, the PlayStation 2 was one of the most inexpensive DVD players on the Japanese market," he explains. "But now, in the U.S., if you're really looking for a DVD player, you can go out today and get one for $199. If that's all folks are looking for, they're not going to pay $299 for a PlayStation 2. So I think the people in the U.S. who are buying a PlayStation 2 are buying it for the computer-entertainment experience, and they're getting the DVD-playing function to boot. But not the other way around."

Even more importantly: The quality and quantity of games hitting the U.S. are several steps above the stuff Japanese gamers have been stuck with for the past seven months (Primal Image, anyone?).

▶ Potential pooper # 2: Too many games suffer from jag-jag-jaggie visuals.

Eye-candy junkies nearly choked on their bubble gum when they first laid eyes on the Japanese launch games. "What's with all that shimmering in Ridge Racer V?" they asked. And, "Ugh, look at all those jaggies." For the uninitiated (or for you folks who haven't seen Tekken Tag Tournament), jaggies are the rough, stair-stepped edges that show up on polygons when the PS2 draws them on your TV screen. Anti-aliasing is the generic term for the technique that smoothes out these jagged edges. The Dreamcast is capable of anti-aliasing. Heck, so is the Nintendo 64. Surely the PS2 can pull it off, right? "Yes. Starfighter supports full-screen anti-aliasing," says Chris Corry, senior programmer for LucasArts' hot-looking space-combat game, "but this question really falls into the infamous category of, 'It depends on what your definition of anti-aliasing is.' The PS2 has built-in hardware support for geometry-based anti-aliasing — sometimes referred to as 'edge-based anti-aliasing.' However, using this feature can be problematic, particularly when rendering transparent geometry, and it requires a great deal of up-front effort to accomplish effectively. For this reason, Starfighter does not use this form of hardware-supported anti-aliasing."

Corry adds, however, that developers have access to a whole range of hardware-independent techniques that can be used to simulate a full-screen anti-aliasing effect. LucasArts' PS2 gurus discovered these techniques some time ago, Corry says, and they implemented them in Starfighter. We know — we've seen the game up close and it suffers minimal jaggies. Plenty of other developers seem to be licking this problem too. "Summoner uses a technique that drastically cuts down on interlace flicker and, as a side effect,

continued on page 202

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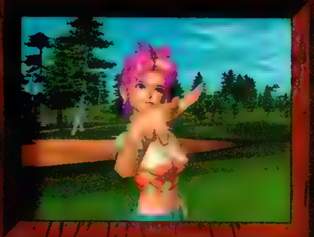

Out here, the goal is simple: accumulate as much stuff as possible. That's what it takes to win - that and a little skill, of course. And if you're expecting some "techie" game, play something else. Swing Away Golf's about fierce competition. You star in an ongoing storyline where your talent and personality develop each time you play. But stay on top of your game, because the better you get, the tougher the courses get. Make opponents insane with envy, as you compete to be the most decorated player on the links.

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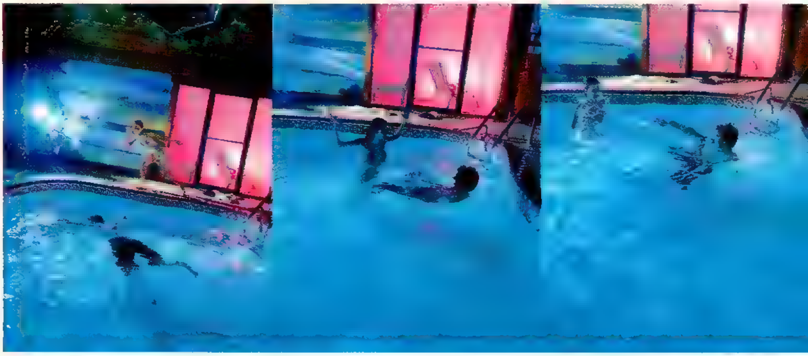
lead programmer at Volition. “If you don't address interlace flicker, some textures and polygon edges tend to shimmer. That's what people were seeing in Japanese launch games and labeling ‘aliasing’ for lack of a better term. It took less than a day to get rid of this effect in Summoner, using code provided by Sony.”

Sony has shared this “pixel offset” method with the development community. Meanwhile, companies like Angel Studios have written their own edge anti-aliasing routines. It looks like the jaggies' days are numbered on the PS2.

▶ Potential pooper # 3: The system's 4 Megs of video RAM just ain't enough.

When Phil Harrison, Sony's VP of third-party relations, first announced the stats of the PS2 at the 1999 Game Developers Conference, programmers and artists in the audience let out a collective groan when he said the system's Graphics Synthesizer would only pack 4 Megabytes of embedded RAM. After all, that's the same amount of video RAM (VRAM) found on the 4-year-old Nintendo 64, and the Dreamcast has twice as much. And plenty of high-profile developers have griped about the VRAM issue ever since. “The limited VRAM compared to the PS2's polygon-rendering ability has definitely been a hurdle to overcome,” Takashi Tokita, director of the team developing The Bouncer at Square, tells us. And Yoshiki Okamoto, president of Capcom subsidiary Flagship, has gone on record as saying the next Resident Evil game on the PS2 currently doesn't look as good as the Dreamcast's Code: Veronica because of the lack of VRAM.

Sony has maintained all along that the limited VRAM isn't a problem because of the lightning-quick speed (1.2 gigabytes per second, to be exact) of the bus that connects the Graphics Synthesizer to the PS2's 32 Megabytes of main memory. In other words, the bus is so zippy at streaming graphics data into the Graphics Synthesizer's VRAM that it's almost like the GS is jacked directly into the main memory. And some developers agree. “We certainly thrash textures in and out of VRAM more often than we would like,” LucasArts' Corry says, “but keep in mind there are some pretty big ‘pipes’ connecting the major components of the PS2 together. That data bandwidth translates into fast texture loads into VRAM, so we're not really complaining.”



Volition's Hague adds, “That huge pipe is key. We're uploading an obscene amount of textures per frame in Summoner. We're not holding back. You're going to see a huge variety of texturing within a single Summoner level.”

For some developers, the PS2's limited VRAM isn't even an issue. It's all a matter of perspective. “The system's VRAM has been a big deal in the media,” says Steven Chiang, executive producer of PS2 killer app Madden NFL 2001, “but the way we look at it is we have a system with more VRAM and RAM than we have ever had. Now, what can we do with it? We are using huge textures in Madden NFL 2001 PS2, and I'm sure we can optimize usage more in the future.”

▶ Potential pooper # 4: The system's revolutionary architecture is just too darn tricky to develop for.

No doubt about it: The PS2's got a lot going on in its guts. Aside from all the Graphics Synthesizer and VRAM hubbub we talked about before, the PS2 is also a multiprocessor system, with two “vector unit” microprocessors running in parallel to the Emotion Engine (the main CPU). These vector units are optimized for lightning-quick geometry processing, but they also come with their own set of technical hurdles. “Both VUs have a relatively small amount of onboard memory for code and data,” Corry says. “This means that VU programming is an extremely low-level chore that requires a tremendous amount of patience and knowledge of the PS2 internal architecture. For many programmers—particularly programmers like myself with a PC background—this level of commitment can be very intimidating.”

Many developers have been quite open with their gripes about the PS2's development environment. (Oddworld Inhabitants' Lorne Lanning—the most vocal PS2 critic of all—said the thing's a “bitch” to work with.) And both Nintendo and Microsoft are hyping how developer-friendly their new systems will be. To their credit, the folks at Sony appear more than aware that they've built a tricky system. Years ago, they established an extensive developer-support program and even fly SWAT teams of techheads out to the offices of coders who hit technical roadblocks. “Sony of America has sponsored development gatherings and has paid for third-party game developers to write example code that solves problems the development community will encounter,” explains Clinton Keith, director of development at Angel Studios, the makers of Smuggler's Run. “They've created an online support and gathering place for developers, which has been a critical resource.”

In the final analysis, it's highly unlikely that developers will abandon the PS2 in droves when the supposedly easier-to-work-with Gamecube and Xbox debut. Sony's system will just have too large an installed base to ignore. And this isn't the first time Sony has heard developers moan about a game system. “The same thing was said to me about the PlayStation development systems when they first came out,” SCEA's Hirai tells us, because developers weren't used to working in 3D, so the system was going to wreak havoc and be the end of the world. But, lo and behold five years later, people can literally come up with PlayStation development with their eyes closed. And I think in a year or two, once developers have embraced the PlayStation 2 technology and become acclimated to it, they're going to be a lot more comfortable with the system.”

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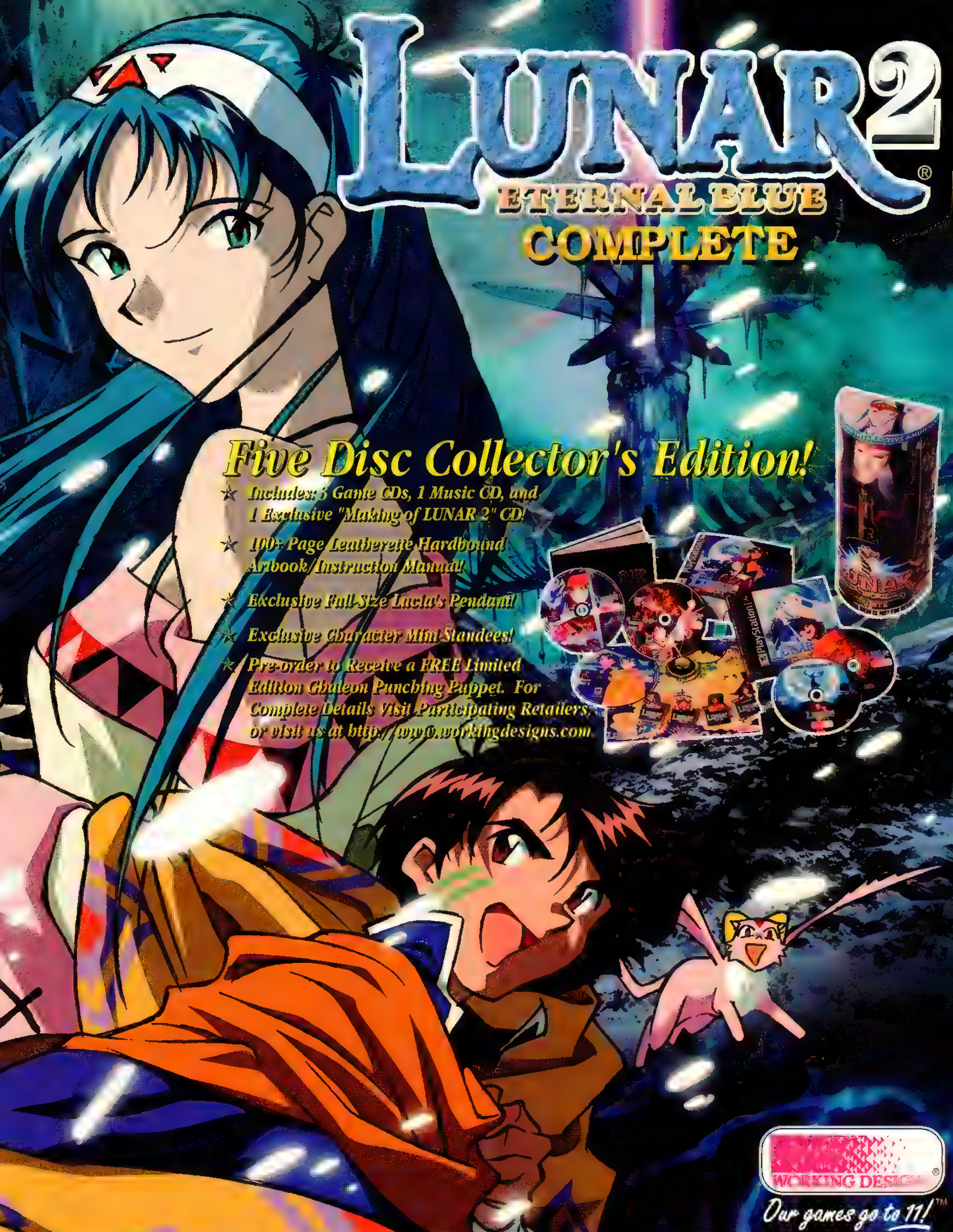

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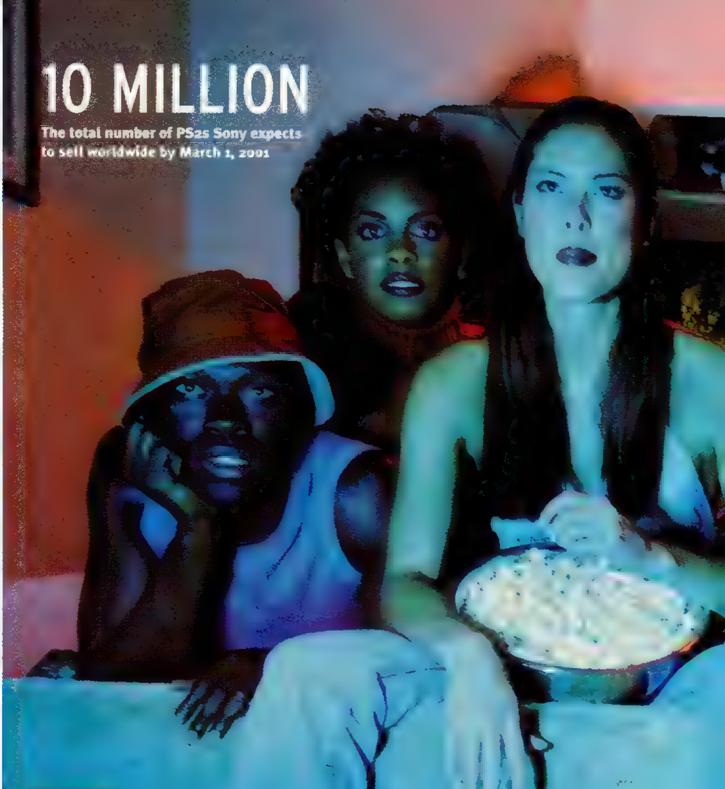
ARE YOU READY FOR DVD?

BY PETER M. BRACKE

THE 15 MUST-BUY FLICKS

With over 6,000 DVDs available in the U.S. alone, the choices for the new DVD consumer can be intimidating to say the least. Below are 15 essential DVDs, which represent the best the format currently has to offer in quality and breadth of supplemental features.



10 MILLION

The total number of PS2s Sony expects to sell worldwide by March 1, 2001

The Matrix—The current best selling DVD of all time. [illegible] and audio and extensive making-of footage detailing the film's award-winning [illegible]

MIB
MEN IN BLACK

Men in Black—Available in both a collector's edition and [illegible] set, this disc is so feature packed it takes hours to get through it all. The "editing [illegible] breaks new ground in DVD interactivity.

Fight Club—In what may be the most feature-loaded disc on the market, this two-disc set boasts no less than four audio commentaries(!) and hours of behind-the-scenes material covering every aspect of the production.

THE EXORCIST

The Exorcist: 25th Anniversary Edition—The horror classic gets the top-notch treatment, with an excellent new transfer and 5.1 mix, two audio commentaries with the filmmakers, a terrific BBC documentary and some truly scary deleted scenes.

BEST PICTURE
AMERICAN BEAUTY

American Beauty—Last year's Best Picture gets the DVD treatment, with an informative audio commentary by the filmmakers and a transfer that shows off Oscar-winner Conrad Hall's cinematography to its fullest advantage.

Tomorrow Never Dies—Perhaps the best of the Bond discs, this double-o DVD winner boasts a killer soundtrack, plenty of behind-the-scenes material and a nifty "storyboard to screen" interactive comparison.

Editor's note: We EGM editors are early adopters, every last one of us. But when we first heard the PS2 would play DVD movies, half the staff held off on buying a standard DVD player. After all, why waste dinero on a stand-alone gizmo when the handy PS2 will pump out both DVD movies and high-powered games? So now that we're ready to spin DVD flicks at our swank launch gala, we turn to Peter M. Bracke, editor in chief of DVDFile.com, and asked him to prepare this ultimate newbie's guide to the world of DVDs. Need more info than what you'll find here? Head to www.dvdfile.com for everything from hardware reviews to movie news. It's the only DVD resource you need.

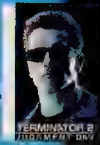
First thing's first: How does the PS2 stack up as a DVD playback device, especially as high-quality stand-alone DVD players continue to become more and more affordable? Connecting the unit is as straightforward as with any VCR. As with the current PlayStation, the PS2 comes with an A/V cable that supports composite video and two-channel audio outputs options (although Sony has kindly included an optical digital connection for outboard 5.1 surround-sound decoders). Once you've powered up the system, you may find the somewhat lengthy setup procedure intimidating, since you'll be selecting parameters such as audio configurations and screen shape. And unfortunately, the PS2's game controller is not the optimum

INDEPENDENCE DAY

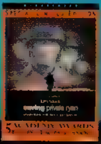
Independence Day—While the sci-fi film may be derivative, the disc is a fan's delight, with both the theatrical and extended version of the film (with nine minutes of additional footage), an alternate ending and plenty of [illegible] [illegible].

The Mummy—[illegible] looking and sounding DVD, the disc of the 1999 remake includes a bevy of behind-the-scenes material, including a look at the eye-popping special effects.

A Bug's Life—The collector's edition two-disc set features not only a breathtaking transfer but a complete A-to-Z of the making of the film, from conceptualization, production, marketing and promotion.



Terminator 2: The Ultimate edition—James Cameron's sci-fi blockbuster features a pristine transfer and reference-standard sound mix, and hours and hours of supplemental material no Terminator fan should miss.



Saving Private Ryan—While short on supplements outside of a heartfelt 30-minute tribute to WWII veterans, Ryan is an aural and visual assault, and remains perhaps the ultimate piece of DVD demo material yet released.

Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me—The comedy blockbuster features an eye-popping image and tons of great extras, including outtakes, deleted scenes, a Dr. Evil "Spy-O-Graphy" and plenty more.

ALIEN—Available individually or as part of the four-disc ALIEN Legacy set (with all four ALIEN movies,) the first disc remains the standout, with a Ridley Scott audio commentary, isolated music score, outtakes and deleted scenes.

GHOSTBUSTERS

Ghostbusters—The comedy classic goes interactive, with the first "video commentary," making-of footage on the special effects, deleted scenes and nifty interactive menus.

THE SIXTH SENSE

The Sixth Sense—The most financially successful horror film of all time comes to DVD with a transfer and sound mix that keeps the film's creepiness intact, extensive interviews and a hidden short film from Director M. Night Shamaylan.

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Ever felt like the whole world was against you?
You're about to experience déjà vu.

As if Mother Nature wasn't enough to deal with, now the number competitors you must climb over to get to the top just increased by a few million. Introducing 4x4 Evolution, the first game with internet connectivity for heavy-duty off-road competitions between Sega Dreamcast, PC, and Mac users simultaneously. The world is far from a level playing field.

ALL THE TOP SUVS AND TRUCKS FROM LEADING MANUFACTURERS TO CUSTOMIZE • 16 MERCILESS OFF-ROAD COURSES, EACH WITH THEIR OWN ACTIVE ENVIRONMENT, MUSIC SCORE,

ONLINE MULTI-PLAYER

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Developed by TERMINAL REALITY

Published by GATHERING OF DEVELOPERS

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Sega Dreamcast.

Mac

PC CD ROM

BARRETT CHRISTY
TODD RICHARDS
CAREY "HART ATTACK" HART
BUCKY LASEK
BOB BURNQUIST
"FLYIN" RYAN NYQUIST
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YOU THINK YOU CAN
GO BIGGER THAN THIS BUNCH?
YEAH RIGHT!

With a combined total of 41 X Games and Gravity Games medals, you think you'd have no chance in hell of ever going bigger than this crew. That's where you're wrong and InterAct is going to help you get there. And the payoff is oh, so sweet. When you purchase InterAct, GameShark and Performance brand videogame accessories now through the end of February 2001, InterAct will give you chances to win posters, skateboards, snowboards, BMX and motorcross bikes, big ticket electronics and some killer trips. Those chances will come every day, every week, and every month through February 2001. It's simple. Buy products. Earn points. Win. What are you waiting for? A personal invite from Dave Mirra?

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navigation device, so even simple tasks like fast forwarding and rewinding can be frustrating. (Third-party remotes will be available at launch, though.)

But with a disc finally fired up, the PS2 offers solid video and audio playback on par with a good mid-level player. Since DVD is a "variable bit rate" format, the main task of any player is keeping up with the flow of digital information streaming off of a disc. The PS2 rises to the challenge, delivering a bright, sharp picture with only occasional artifacting (picture break up) noticeable on some movies. The audio is clear and free from distortion, though occasionally on the "bright" or harsh side (an outboard 5.1 decoder is recommended). And like all DVD players, the PS2 can output video in either the 4:3 aspect ratio of current television sets or 16x9 widescreen shape of the new DTV standard. The better your monitor, the better the image you'll most likely receive.

KNOW THE LINGO

For the uninitiated, the DVD format can be confusing and often intimidating. Below are a number of common DVD terms and features that should help any newbie successfully navigate the torrid DVD waters:

- **Analog Video**—Format that uses electrical signals to reproduce pictures and sounds. Precursor to Digital Video.
- **Digital Video**—The representation of audio and video data in the form of bits and bytes, or a series of ones and zeroes. DVD and PlayStation 2 are digital formats, and digital signals can be converted to analog for playback on current analog television systems.
- **Anamorphic (also 16x9 Enhanced)**—The process of optically squeezing an image to provide for higher resolution. DVDs that are anamorphically enhanced can work on existing analog televisions but offer superior resolutions on digital television systems.
- **Artifact**—An unwelcome visual distortion caused by the digitization and compression processes the DVD format is based on. The most common is blocking, in which a small group of pixels are combined to form "blocky pictures" and other distracting effects.
- **Aspect Ratio**—The proportion of the height and width of an image, expressed as a ratio. Common aspect ratios include 4:3 (the roughly squarish shape of current televisions) and widescreen ratios such as 16x9 (the shape of Digital TVs), or even wider theatrical ratios.
- **Authoring**—The process of creating and designing DVD software.
- **Audio Commentary**—A separate audio track that can feature filmmakers, actors, crew or other participants commenting and discussing the program material synchronous to the video.
- **Chapter Stop**—A location on a disc authored as an access point for a user to access, analogous to a "track" on a CD.
- **Component Output**—The highest-quality output currently available for home electronics components. It provides pure digital connection with little to no loss in color and detail. Both Sony and Monster Cable are offering a component cable at launch.
- **Composite Output**—The lowest-quality output, this combines all color and brightness variables in one signal, which can create deficiencies in the image.
- **Compression (also MPEG-2)**—The process of reducing the quantity of data by combining redundant video and audio information to consume less storage space on a DVD disc.
- **CSS**—A means of digital copy protection included on most current DVD discs. Can be defeated by the "DeCSS" hack, which is currently under legal fire by the MPAA and all motion-picture studios.
- **Digital Televisions (also DTV, HDTV)**—Refers to the new digital television system characterized by higher resolution, digital sound and often a widescreen aspect ratio. The Playstation 2 is compatible with DTV and HDTV monitors, although you'll need a component video cable.
- **Dolby Digital**—An audio encoding process created by Dolby Laboratories for the compression of from 1 to 5.1 channels of audio. The standard audio format for DVD.
- **DTS**—An optional audio encoding process to Dolby Digital, currently supported by some software studios and hardware manufacturers. It requires a DTS decoder.
- **Letterbox (also Widescreen)**—The process of placing black bars at the top and bottom, or left and right of an image to re-create a different aspect ratio (screen shape). Many DVDs are letterboxed to preserve the original widescreen theatrical aspect ratio.
- **Pan & Scan**—A means to avoid letterboxing by "panning and scanning" the camera across a widescreen image, cropping the picture to the 4:3 aspect ratio of current TV monitors.
- **Macrovision**—A copy protection currently employed on most DVDs to protect copying to analog formats like VHS.
- **Multi-Angle**—A feature on some DVDs that offers access to separate video tracks at the touch of a button. DVD is capable of switching from one angle to another if multiple views have been encoded, and this feature can be used to show different program material synchronized to the same audio.
- **Parental Lock**—The ability to encode a DVD with a parental control level to prevent playback of material higher than the level set.
- **Region Code**—Every DVD disc is "flagged" with a Region Code number from "0" (all regions) or "1" to "8," which corresponds to a specific region of the world where the DVD can only be played. The U.S. PlayStation 2 will be a Region 1 device, (U.S. and Canada.)

PARTY FAVORS

INTERACT PS2 DVD REMOTE

Price: $15
www.interact-acc.com

Having a full-fledged DVD remote for the PS2 eliminates having an unsightly cord draped across your living room while watching *The Matrix*. Pop in a couple of batteries, plug the infra-red receptor into the controller port and you're good to go. For $10 more, InterAct is also offering a slightly beefier version that controls your TV, too.

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START
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SERIES

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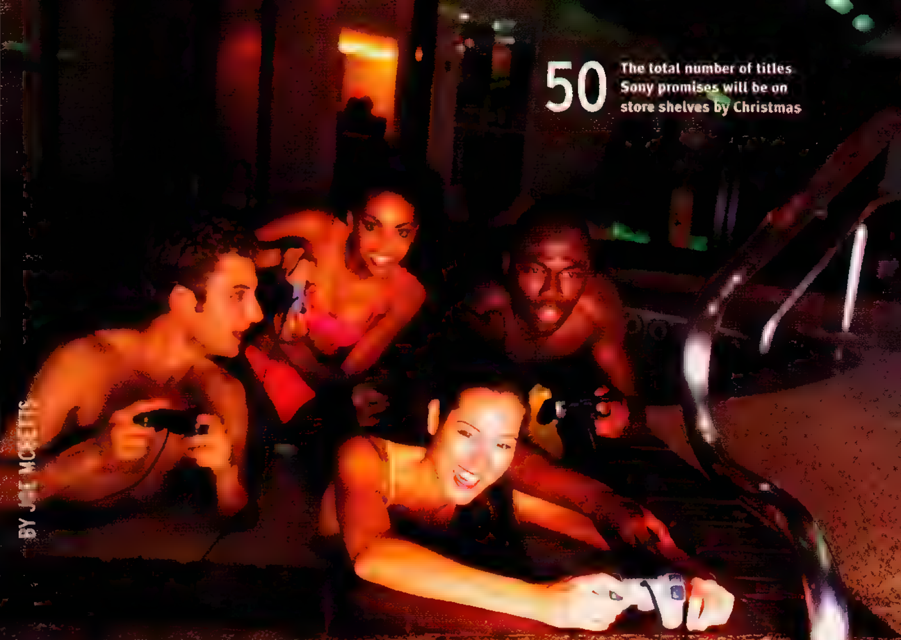
TURN IT UP!

BY JOE MCBETTS



50 The total number of titles Sony promises will be on store shelves by Christmas

WANNA LIVEN UP YOUR LAUNCH PARTY? TRICK OUT YOUR PS2 WITH SOME HIGH-END GEAR

Editor's note: Believe it or don't, the PlayStation 2 isn't gonna be the ultimate high-powered party machine right outta the box. To get the most out of this system, you're gonna need to hook it up to some high-end audio and video gear. So we turned to Joe McBetts, who's written for several home theater magazines, to give us the lowdown on the PS2's A/V abilities, as well as recommend the right equipment.

Are you already impressed with the capabilities of current videogame technology? Wait until you see, and hear, the high-end audio/video potential that Sony's new PS2 console brings to the table. It starts with the PS2's compatibility with Dolby Digital and DTS 5.1-channel surround sound. These formats offer five full-bandwidth, discrete (each speaker delivers a different sound) channels and a seat-rattling low-frequency effects (LFE) channel (designated as ".1"), which deliver a significant sonic improvement over Dolby Pro Logic's two discrete front channels, matrixed center channel and mono rear channels. Both Dolby Digital and DTS are excellent-sounding formats—which sounds better is a matter of personal opinion. DTS uses less compression (requiring three times the disc space of Dolby Digital to store), which some feel offers a richer, more natural sound. Dolby Digital proponents point to its more efficient encoding process, engaging dynamics, and the far greater availability of Dolby Digital software.

The PS2's optical output allows you to make a direct digital audio connection to an outboard processor. This quality interconnect is highly resistant to interference of any kind, represents one less leg that the signal has to travel in the analog domain (where it is far more susceptible to degradation), and allows you to employ the digital-to-analog converters in the external processor, which should be far superior in quality to any that would have been used if Sony had stuck an internal Dolby Digital or DTS processor in the PS2 (a feature that would have also jacked up the system's price). In other words, you'll need a DTS- or DD-compatible receiver or processor to take advantage of these audio formats, but I'll get to the gear in a sec.

Video receives no less attention with the PS2's component video output. Offering a superior image to composite video, which jumbles all of the video signal's elements together, or S-video, which only separates luminance (black and white) information from chrominance (color) information, component video connections use three separate cables, usually terminated in RCA jacks. Luminance information is carried on one cable (labeled "Y"), blue color information on another ("Pb" or "Cb"), and red color information on the third ("Pr" or "Cr"). The result is a cleaner picture, less susceptible to anomalies and video noise, with far better color rendition and overall accuracy. The PS2 also supports VGA output, like the Dreamcast, but only certain games will support this output initially.

So what kinda stuff will you need to take full advantage of the PS2's spiffed-up audio-visual features? Read on. I've assembled a variety of components that'll help you get the most out of your PlayStation 2 just in time for your launch party.

12:00 AM Havana, Cuba.
Go for a jog. Get away from it all.
POLICE
DRIVER2.COM
PlayStation
RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB
INFOGRAMES

Denon AVR-3300 A/V receiver

The AVR-3300 gives you a lot to work with for $999: Dolby Digital and DTS processing, 105 watts x 5 channels of amplification, plenty of digital and analog inputs/outputs, component video switching, and all the convenience and user-friendliness you should expect from an A/V receiver. The AVR-3300 will give you everything you need until you're ready to graduate to separates.

Sony Wega KV-36XBR400 television

The crème de la crème of Sony's non-HD direct-view TVs, the 36-inch KV-36XBR400 makes everything—video games, DVD or plain old TV—look outstanding. Picture quality alone makes the $2,699 price tag bearable, and features are plentiful too. Less expensive alternatives include the 32-inch KV-32XBR400 ($2,199), 36-inch KV-36FS12 ($1,699), or the 35-inch KV-35S66 ($1,299).

M&K LCR-45 satellite speakers

At less than eight inches high and $199 (each), the LCR-45 is a convenient and relatively inexpensive way to build a 5.1-channel system, or add surround sound to your two-channel setup. M&K is virtually synonymous with studio sound and it shows in their speakers, even the little guys. Add a powered sub and you've got yourself a punchy, full-range system that knocks out a sound far larger than the diminutive cabinets would suggest.

Phase Technology Teatro 11.5 speaker system

Whether purchased separately or as a whole ($1,785 for a 5.1 system), the Teatros offer excellent sound that should cost a lot more. The left and right front speakers each house powered subwoofers, and the system includes a dedicated center channel speaker and compact surround speakers. In addition to their sonic capabilities, the Teatros are well-designed and well-built, not to mention easy on the eyes with a variety of finishes. For a more enveloping rear image, try some of Phase Tech's dipolar surround speakers.

lexicon
LEXICON MC-1

Lexicon MC-1 preamplifier/processor

When you're ready to step up to the major leagues in processing, look up the MC-1. Sure, $5,995 ain't cheap, but considering this unit's unbeatable performance, and Lexicon's unique upgrade/trade-in policies, the money is truly an investment. The sound is sweet, the interface is user-friendly, and the amount of processing options—as well as the control you have over them—is unsurpassed.

Mitsubishi WT-46807 television

Prepping yourself for the widescreen, digital future, and getting the most out of today's video offerings, can be done in style with the WT-46807. It's HD-ready at $4,300, and through Mitsubishi's "Promise" program it can be fully outfitted for HD for about $1,000 more. (For the unitiated, HD-ready means the set has the necessary horizontal and vertical resolution to display HD signals, as well as the necessary scan rates, but it doesn't actually have an HD decoder/tuner built in. This set is a solid deal compared to full-HD sets that sell for thousands more. The picture is great, the 16:9 aspect ratio adds a cinematic quality, and the set will handle just about everything you throw at it.

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FOR THE [MOST] REALISTIC DRIVING SIMULATION EVER... TRULY SOME GIFT FROM THE GODS"
- GAMERS' REPUBLIC

"THIS IS CERTAINLY ONE OF THE MOST INCREDIBLE-LOOKING RACING GAMES EVER SEEN"
- OFFICIAL DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

"VISUALLY, THIS IS NOTHING SHORT OF AMAZING"
- DREAMCAST MAGAZINE

F355 challenge™

Passione Rossa

curve
100R 60R
082
109
096
119

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Dreamcast™

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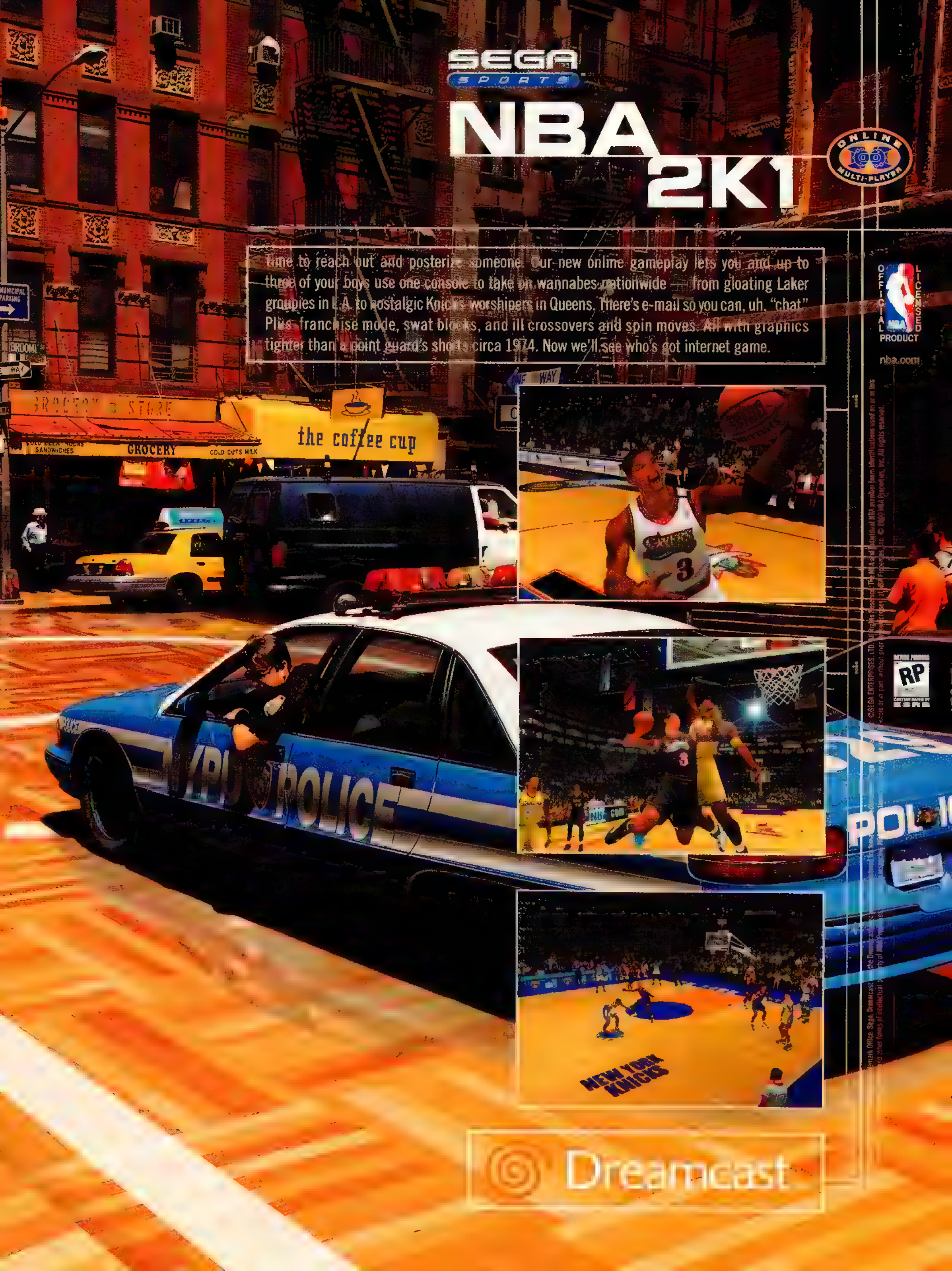
THE COURT'S GOING TO BE A LITTLE WIDER THIS SEASON.
WAY
GROCERY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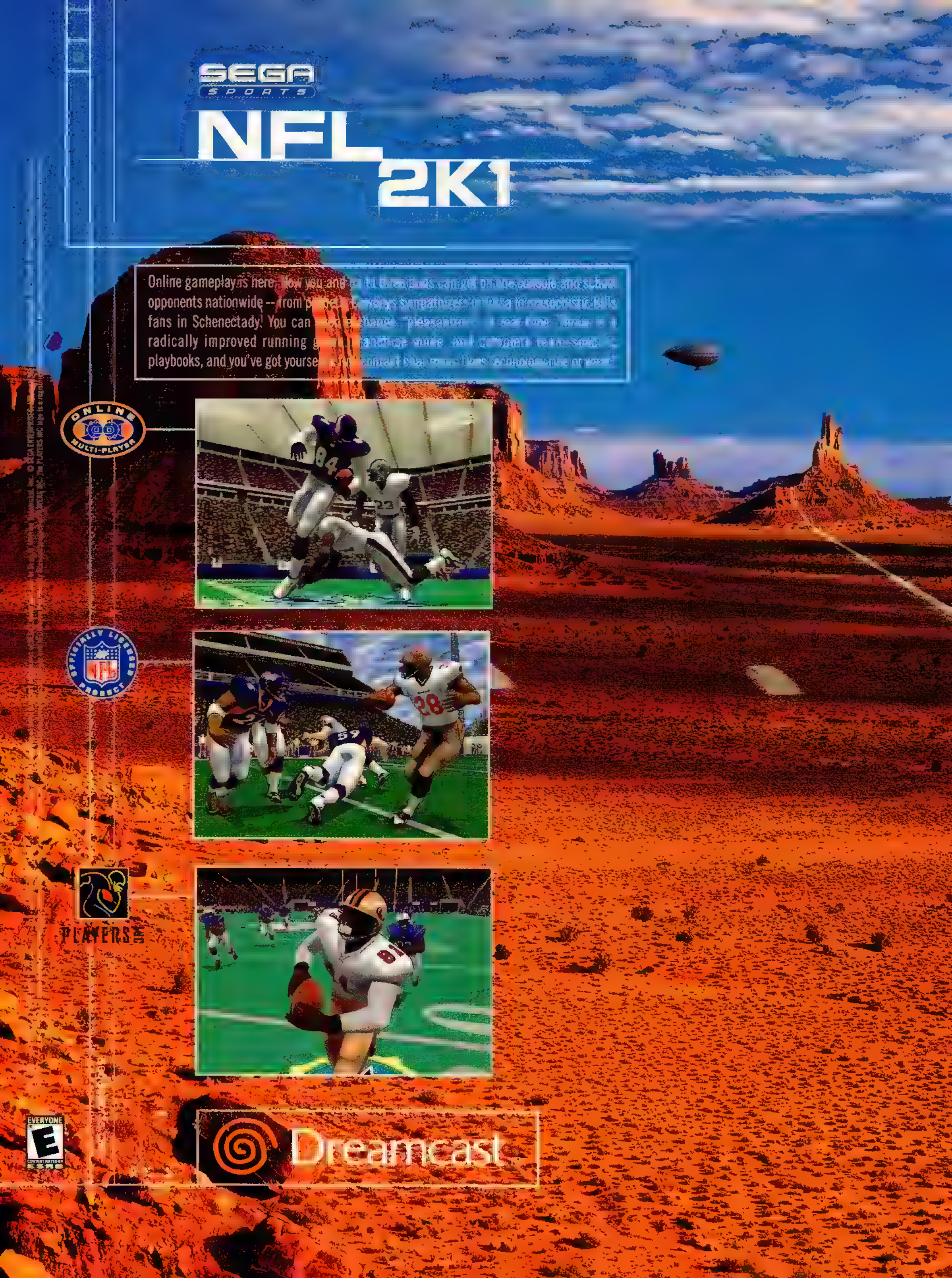
NBA 2K1

Time to reach out and posterize someone. Our new online gameplay lets you and up to three of your boys use one console to take on wannabes nationwide — from gloating Laker groupies in L.A. to nostalgic Knicks worshipers in Queens. There's e-mail so you can, uh, "chat." Plus: franchise mode, swat blocks, and ill crossovers and spin moves. All with graphics tighter than a point guard's shorts circa 1974. Now we'll see who's got internet game.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NFL 2K1
ONLINE MULTI-PLAYER
OFFICIALLY LICENSED PRODUCT
NFL
PLAYERS INC
EVERYONE
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Dreamcast

Online gameplay is here. Now you and [illegible] in three pals can get on one console and school opponents nationwide -- from p[illegible] Cowboys sympathizers in Tulsa to eccentric Bills fans in Schenectady! You can [illegible] change "pleasantries" in real time. Throw in a radically improved running g[illegible] franchise mode, and completely retooled playbooks, and you've got yourse[illegible]

SUDDENLY, THE WHOLE COUNTRY IS INBOUNDS.
20

HOW TO GET A JOB

Tired of your button-down job? Wanna make games instead of just play 'em? Writer Mark Saltzman talks shop with the brightest stars in the industry. Have they got a job for you!

It sounds like the ultimate dream job: creating video games for a living. But nowadays, that dream can easily be a reality—and the timing couldn't be better. The interactive entertainment industry has ballooned into a multibillion-dollar business, with revenues rivaling box-office movie receipts for the first time in its 25-year history. In other words, what took Hollywood 75 years to do, the gaming industry has surpassed in less than a third of the time.

And talk about an industry with a future. We're on the brink of the bloodiest console war to date. Plus there's PC games, Internet-only titles, handheld systems (Game Boy Advance, Palm/Pocket PCs and cell phones), and coin-op arcade machines are making a long-overdue comeback with the music-game craze sweeping Asia and America. Get the picture?

But as you're probably aware, there are many different kinds of jobs in "da biz." You'll also find many different ways to break into the industry, though the most common routes are to either apply for a job at an existing studio or to create the game on your own terms and sell it yourself or approach a publisher and/or distributor to pick up the title. This industry is full of successful folks who have chosen either of these two approaches, but the former is more likely these days.

If you're passionate enough to put up with nightmarish crunch-time work marathons, game jobs can pay a decent chunk of change, too. Sure, starting pay may not fill your garage with Ferraris like the guys at id Software drive, but if you establish a proven track record, a salary well over 100K is not out of the question.

This comprehensive *EGM* feature is designed to help you decide what kind of job you're after by outlining the responsibilities per position and the best ways to break into the industry. We went straight to the pros and got a novel's worth of great advice from some of today's on how to maximize your chances of getting in, and becoming as famous as they have.

Everybody in? Well, flip the page and let's begin!

Illustrations by Chris Martin

IN THE GAMES BIZ

ARTIST/ANIMATOR

QUICK TIPS:

- Put together and distribute a high-quality portfolio/demo reel that showcases your artistic creativity and versatility
- Develop a knowledge of new as well as old creative methods
- Be flexible, both artistically and functionally. Communication and teamwork are essential parts of the job
- Get professional instruction if you have access to it. Whatever you know, you can always learn more

Salary: $35,000 to $90,000

Crucial Tools: Maya, 3D Studio MAX, Photoshop, Softimage

Pam's Dog Grooming

Let's face it—we live in a visual culture, so it's easy to see why both game makers and game players put such a very heavy emphasis on a game's graphics. In most cases, it's what is used to sell a game (see the ads in this magazine!) and will likely be the first thing you'll notice in a game ("Whoa—check out how realistic the cars are in GT 2000!"). Graphics also happen to eat up the biggest chunk of the game-design budget, so game development houses invest heavily in good 2D and 3D artists, not to mention the software needed to create the visuals. Art-related positions at a company come in a huge variety. You'll find artists who create "classical" hand-drawn concept sketches, artists who create computer-generated 2D backgrounds and sprites, artists who render 3D characters and objects. And then you have the animators who give the characters and objects life. There are also "art technicians," who work specifically on the programming side of placing the graphics in the game engine.

And if any game features beautiful artwork and animation it's Square's beloved Final Fantasy and Parasite Eve series, led by Tetsuya Nomura. This prestiged graphic designer says those looking to break into the industry as artists must actively look for employment opportunities and just apply for the position. He adds, "It is also very important to prepare a portfolio that shows passion and talent."

Nomura says that while they use Adobe Photoshop quite often, it's important for game artists to be able to draw with a pen and paper, too. "I don't think there are any specific tools that artists need to have mastered," adds Nomura. "In many instances, artists will learn hands-on at work if the tools they can use are different from what's being required."

They also need a personality, Nomura believes. "If I was to hire someone, I would want them to understand me entirely—my visions, my thoughts. He or she needs to think on the same page as me. Even if they can't tell a joke, they'll at least have to laugh to mine!"

And if you've ever hung around video game art circles, the word "personality" will likely conjure an image of Rodney Greenblat, the talented freelance artist who is best known for the unique visuals seen in Sony's PaRappa the Rapper and UmJammer Lammy. Greenblat believes the Internet "is such a great place to experiment with interactivity and show your work. In the early '90s, CD-ROMs were the medium of choice for these kinds of experiments, but the distribution was terrible."

When asked what is the first thing a budding artist should do to get a job at a development studio, he replies, "If you are into 3D design and animation, you better come up with a demo reel of models and interesting motion. Use the highest-end software you can get your hands on...but mostly get out the paper and pencil and draw. Make storyboards and character designs. Write proposals that anyone can understand." Greenblat also maintains that a successful game artist must be able to compromise his work for the greater whole (the game) and must also be able to work with lots of people, as it's not usually a solo venture.

Is schooling all that important? Do they teach you what you need to know or is it best to be self-educated? Greenblat ponders the question and answers, "College and design schools are good places, because the instructors and other students can help you get a professional edge. At the same time keep your eyes on the current market. What sells and what is good are usually two different things. They always forget this at college.

"And don't worry about the tools. If you can make something great with Windows 95 and an old copy of Director, studio management will appreciate this. Being able to run effects filters on a high-end system is not a good way to show your creativity."

Lastly, Greenblat reminds anxious artists not to expect to enter any company at the top—or even the middle—of the corporate structure. "Be prepared to empty wastepaper baskets and pick up the boss' kids at dance practice," he says.

For more on game-artist jobs, we turned to Visual Concepts, Sega's in-house development teams responsible for such jaw-dropping Dreamcast games as NFL 2K1 and NBA 2K1. Greg Thomas, a 12-year video game veteran, is the VP of product development there, and says while his first job was making games in a garage, it has become much more difficult to do it solo these days. Instead, Thomas advises that you get a very strong portfolio together, and be sure to have strong traditional art skills. "That's what I look for," he says, "but also mainly passion and talent. With these two things, I'm sure budding game artists will succeed. They also need to be a good communicator, and not have an ego."

Thomas says knowing how to use Alias-Wavefront's Maya and/or Adobe Photoshop is handy if applying as a modeler, texturer or animator. "And go to school for sure," he adds.

WE ASKED MORE THAN A DOZEN GAME DESIGNERS THE BIG QUESTION: HOW DID YOU BREAK INTO THE INDUSTRY? THEIR RESPONSES ARE SCATTERED THROUGHOUT THIS FEATURE.

Jason Rubin, Naughty Dog

"My partner, Andy Gavin and I, wrote a game for the Apple IIe called Ski Crazed. It used some assembly sprite routines from a company called Baudville. We sent them a sample of the game and asked if we could publish it locally in our hometown of Washington, D.C. At that time, publishing meant selling three copies to each store in the area packaged in a Ziplock bag, with a color copy for a cover. They asked if they could publish it nationally, and so it began. Two games later, when we were both 17, Andy and I scored a contract with Electronic Arts. We were in the big time at that point."

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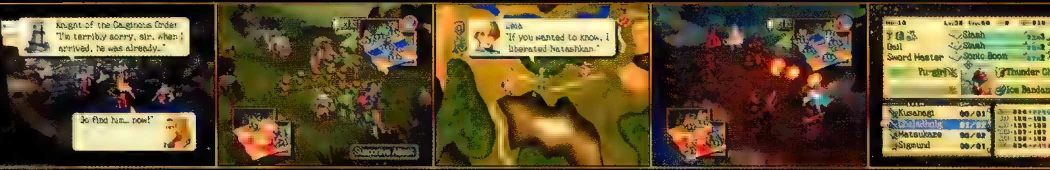

Knight of the Caliginous Order
"I'm terribly sorry, sir. When I arrived, he was already..."

"Go find him... now!"

Lela
"If you wanted to know, I liberated Natashkan."

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No 10
Gail
Sword Master
Slash
Slash
Sonic Boom
Thunder Cl
Ice Bandan
Kusanagi
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GAME PROGRAMMER

QUICK TIPS:

- **Gain exposure to companies at conventions or other public events**
- **Be able to write concise code and find/fix bugs in your own and other programmers' code**
- **Practice tweaking others' code while gaining experience and education wherever you can**
- **Mock up a demo mini-game to showcase your skills**

Salary: **$40,000 to $120,000**
Crucial Tools: **Visual C++, Assembly Language**

Now we've arrived at the meat and potatoes of game production—programming. Of course, programming refers to designing and writing a computer program, and, in our case, a game or game engine. In a nutshell, it's a programmer's job to decide what the game needs to do, develop the logic of how to do it, and write instructions for the computer in a language that it can translate into its own language and execute (such as Microsoft Visual C++).

Bear in mind there are many different kinds of programmers hired at game development houses. Lead programmers are in charge of all other programmers; artificial intelligence (A.I.) specialists must make computer-controlled objects appear to be lifelike; network programmers work on the multiplayer code for Internet/LAN games; audio programmers are responsible for the implementation of all audio in the game (music, sound effects, voice talent); graphics programmers code the display engine and the tools related to it; interface programmers work on the, well, interface; and so forth. Whew!

These code-crunchers are accountable for creating the backbone of the game, so their job is extremely important (not coincidentally, they typically get paid more than folks in other game-related jobs). Are you ready for that kind of reward and responsibility? Great then, so let's continue...

Matt Householder, Senior Producer at Blizzard Entertainment, has been in the industry for almost 20 years, having worked on the Krull coin-op, Moon Patrol for the Colecovision, Winter Games, Summer Games, and most recently, Diablo II for the PC and Mac. He says there's one thing a wannabe game programmer should keep in mind—you're not alone. "It's more difficult to get a job as a programmer now than before because there are lots more people who want to become game programmers. However, the best way to get noticed is to put yourself 'in the right place at the right time.' Go to the game industry annual conventions. In North America, these are the Game Developers' Conference—especially the Job Fair—and E3 [the Electronic Entertainment Exposition]."

Furthermore, Householder maintains budding programmers should demonstrate that they play, know and love games and can code expertly. One suggestion is to write some kind of demo "mini-game." As far as the key personal or professional attributes you need to be a games programmer, Householder says, "Be able to find and fix bugs quickly. Be able to read code written by other programmers. Be able to write tools for use by others (generally non-programmers) on the game development team. Be able to work effectively for weeks at a time during 'crunch mode'—high-stress, long hours, late nights and all-nighters—to meet deadlines for tradeshows, beta, and final product releases."

Tommy Tallarico, Tommy Tallarico Studios

"I'm originally from Springfield, Mass., and when I was a kid I always wanted to move to Southern California to be a musician (doesn't everybody?). Anyway, when I turned 21, I left Massachusetts and drove across [the] country to Southern California. The only thing I really knew out here was Hollywood, so I drove to Hollywood. I didn't have a place to stay, didn't know anybody, didn't have a job, and oh yeah, I didn't have any money! So I showed up in Hollywood, took a look around and said, "What the hell is this?!" For those of you who have been to Hollywood, you know what I'm talking about. Hollywood isn't exactly the way they portray it on TV—it's pretty much a dump. So I picked up a newspaper and I got a job the very next day selling keyboards at Guitar Center. I was sleeping either in my car or on Huntington Beach at this point, so I was looking for anything I could find. Believe it or not, the very first person to walk in the store happened to be a producer for a new software company starting up called Virgin Mastertronic. I've loved music my whole life, I've been playing piano since I was 3 years old. My second love has always been video games. Never in my whole life did I ever think of putting my two loves together...until that day.

I became the first tester at Virgin the next day. There were only about 15 people at Virgin at the time, so they didn't need a full-time musician. When the first opportunity arose for music (Prince of Persia on the Game Boy), I jumped on it. I would sit down with the programmers and technicians every chance I got to learn about the machines. I worked on Prince of Persia for free and on the weekends and after work. The VP of the company was so impressed he made me the music guy! My next game was Global Gladiators on the Genesis which won "Best music of the year" and I've been doing it ever since!"

Householder says programmers should get their hands on any compiler/debugger/source code they can find to tweak their skills. On a non-technical note, he says to "be prepared for rejection or even the feeling that you're being ignored, but don't take it personally. Persistence pays off, so don't give up."

Have you ever heard of a couple of successful medical doctors becoming game programmers? Meet Ray Muzyka, Joint CEO of BioWare, who founded the company back in 1995 with Greg Zeschuk. In just five years, BioWare has grown to more than 100 employees and developed a number of hit titles such as Baldur's Gate and MDK 2. When he hired these 100-plus employees, Muzyka says he looked for a few things such as education, experience and personal references, as well as a real interest in and understanding of video games. "A game programmer must be diligent, hardworking, willing to work in a team, and a touch of perfectionism thrown in won't hurt," he explains. "It's hard sometimes to get that last 5 percent of a game's development done, but it is often the most important 5 percent—finding and fixing every last bug is critical for quality."

Much like the other famous "algorithm analysts" featured in this section, Muzyka says the languages they use (mainly) are Microsoft Visual C++ and Assembly language, so a good working knowledge of these is ideal, but again, he reverts back to his earlier advice: "If you work hard and get a good education and some good experience, things usually turn out OK."

Our last few words of wisdom on game programming are from Ed Logg. You may not know his name, but chances are, you've played a number of his time-withstanding arcade classics, including Super Breakout, Asteroids, Centipede, Millipede, Gauntlet, Gauntlet II and many, many others. He's been programming and designing games professionally since (gulp!) March of 1978, and unofficially 10 years earlier!

Logg admits it was easier to do game programming back then because the games were simpler and there was just one programmer and one artist (if any at all), but "the old hardware often had severe limitations so it was often harder to get what you wanted done." Logg says a budding game programmer must definitely have a deep interest in games, some C experience, and the ability to quickly write good code. He elaborates: "Experience with multiple C compilers will teach the proper technique for writing code that is more portable. Experience in assembly language is often a great tool to understanding how to design a game and write better programs and algorithms. Unfortunately very few schools seem to teach this anymore."

That said, Logg also maintains that experience is always a plus, but he also looks for inexperienced programmers "who seem to be so much better than their peers."

Lookin' for Work? Head to the Web

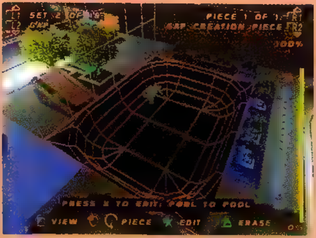
This feature may cover a lot of ground in a number of areas, but by no means is it the final word on how to break into the gaming industry. The Internet is an outstanding medium for both novice and seasoned game developers to interact, learn and make connections. The following few Web sites and Usenet newsgroups are perfect for those who want to hone their craft as a game designer or to help find work, or both. Be sure to bookmark these babies...

- **Gamasutra** [www.gamasutra.com] is simply one of the best game design Web sites, covering a wealth of topics, from programming to graphic design, sound engineering to music, even areas dedicated to the production, legal and business angle of the gaming industry.
- **GameJobs** [www.gamejobs.com] serves as a comprehensive listing of companies involved with the video-games industry, with a direct link to the appropriate human resources page for each company.
- **Game Developers Conference** [www.gdconf.com] is a must-attend annual show for those thinking about breaking into the biz. It takes place every March in San Jose, Calif., (just outside of San Francisco) and this site offers all the information you'll need on how to register and get there. Plus, it lists all the events, seminars, keynote speeches, contests and more.
- **GameDev.Net** [www.gamedev.net] is an excellent Web 'zine devoted to the development of computer games. It's got news, feature articles, community info, editorials, Q&A, helpful books and other resources.
- **Game Design Newsgroup** [rec.games.design] is ideal to keep abreast on all the latest happenings, to exchange ideas or ask queries yourself.
- **Game Development Search Engine** [www.game-developer.com] is the definitive search engine and directory to many of the game developer sites on the Internet.
- **GarageGames.com** [www.garagegames.com] is the first Web-based publishing label for independent games and gamemakers. It provides everything you should need to make and sell high-quality games.
- **Loony Games** [www.loonygames.com] offers insight on game design and development and houses many feature stories and regular columns written by some of the industry's finest game designers, programmers and artists.

Free Tools for Budding Game Designers

Fortunately, for those looking to become full-time and famous game designers one day, many computer games offer free tools to help tweak your trade. Think about it—if you want to become a programmer, why not create a few MODs (modifications) for your favorite first-person shooters, while up-and-coming artists could start designing "skins" (character textures) for these games, and level designers can start designing maps, and so forth. And hundreds of PC games are released each year with these free tools available on the CD or as a free download off the Web. Recent examples include Diablo II, Vampire: The Masquerade—Redemption, Dark Reign II or KISS: Psycho Circus—The Nightmare Child. And recently, Valve Software and Sierra Studios released the Half-Life Full SDK (Software Development Kit), which contains all the resources needed to build any type of game imaginable to run as an add-on for Half-Life. You can even learn a few lessons in basic game design on the consoles by building courses in Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 or your own RPG with Agetec's RPG Maker.

So, instead of complaining about the quality of today's PC games, put your mouse where your mouth is and start creating your own.



The ultimate "edutainment": Tony Hawk 2's level editor will teach you a thing or two about game design.

Tetsuya Nomura, Square

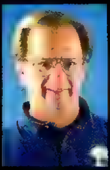
> "I was a fan of Mr. Yoshitaka Amano and his work, so I thought Square would provide me some sort of opportunity to lead me in that direction. It actually wasn't that I wanted to get in the video-game industry (and become a designer for video games)."

Matt Householder, Blizzard Entertainment

"I moved to Chicago to work on my Computer Science master's degree (and look for a game programming job) and met the VP of Software for a coin-op video game company in one of my classes. He was looking for programmers and hired me when I graduated."

Ed Logg, Atari

"A friend had left the company to join Atari across the street and suggested I apply for a job. I had played a prototype of the Atari 2600 several months before at a holiday party and I was very impressed, so I decided to give it a try. They had openings in their coin-operated games division, so that is where I started."



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LEVEL DESIGNER

As Joanna Dark, you take a step out of the elevator, look to the right and left, then run down the hallway, dodging bullets spewing from a couple of office doors. You then find an empty room full of ammo, change weapons, take a breather, and then proceed back to take out the three terrorists hiding behind the desks...

If it wasn't for level designers, there would be no elevator, no hallway, no rooms and no ammo. You see, level design pertains to creating the architecture of a game (i.e., the office building), along with dealing with object placement (ammo), mission or goal of the map (stay alive, kill the bad guys), and often mini-missions within the level (find a key to the room holding the kidnapped scientist).

And here's the good news: Many hardcore gamers who make levels in their spare time for fun are now being snagged by world-renowned development houses to create the maps for their upcoming games. How cool is that? Take, for example, Paul Jaquays, the brains behind many of the beloved id Software maps in Quake II and Quake III Arena. When asked what a newbie level designer should do to get a job in the industry, Jaquays advises, "Be able to show a track record of designing product...that means he or she has to have something that they have done and can show that they can do the work. If possible, this should be something original...this includes designing maps for first-person shooters or real-time strategy games."

Jaquays maintains that the level designer needs to be a creative problem solver and must adapt quickly and with grace to changes in the project and his or her work environment. He says, "A designer needs to be self-motivating and be able to turn an assignment around without having to be reminded that it's due. And a designer absolutely, positively must work well in a team setting."

On the console side, DreamWorks Interactive's Medal of Honor features some incredible level design, replicating many of the real-world locales found during WWII. Peter Hirschmann, producer and writer of the game (and its sequel) was responsible for its level design, as well. Hirschmann advises that budding level designers should scour the career section of their favorite developers' Web sites and scan for openings. "We'd never hire anyone for a junior designer position just off

QUICK TIPS:

- **Show previous design products that reflect innovation**
- **Know the hardware's limitations, but don't be afraid to push the programmers to achieve something original**
- **Practice using the level editors that ship with first-person shooters and strategy games**
- **Distribute your work on the Internet and be persistent**

Salary: $30,000 to $45,000
Crucial Tools: LightWave 3D, 3D Studio MAX, Level Editors, Design Programs (Visio, CAD), IMAGINATION!

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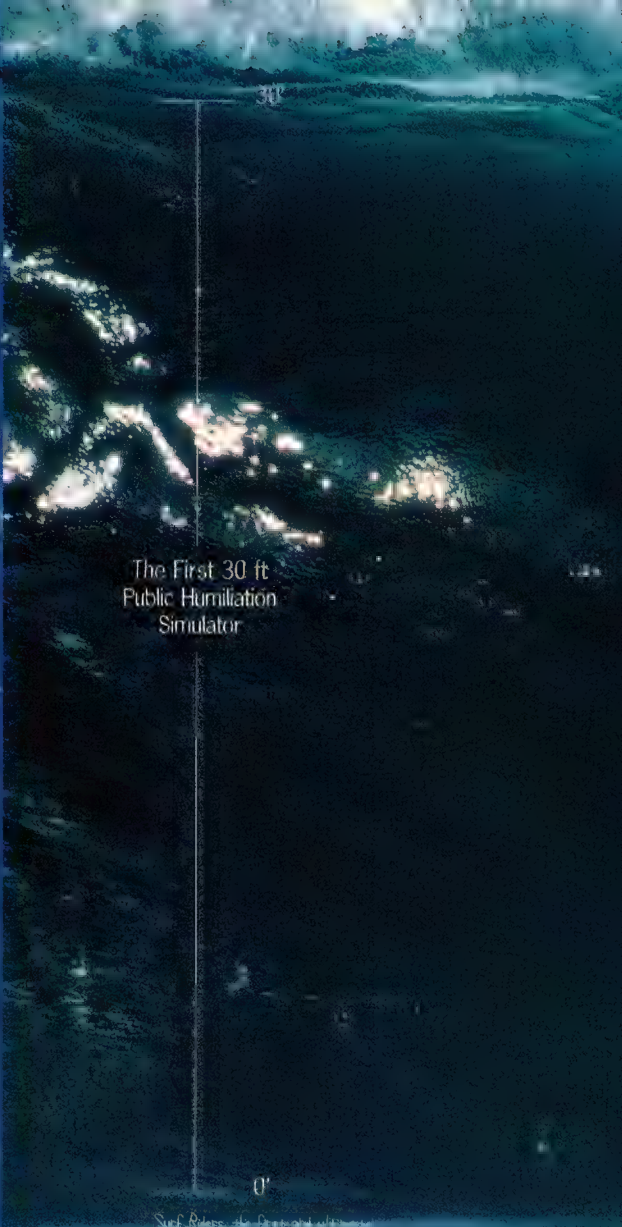

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Paul Jaquays, Level Designer for id Software

"I started doing art for fantasy RPG magazines and published *The Dungeoneer*, my own D&D fan magazine, in the '70s. I parlayed that into my first job designing and illustrating D&D adventures for Judges Guild. In 1980, my acquaintance with Mike Stackpole (who now writes the *Star Wars Rogue Squadron* novels and his own fantasy adventure epics) took me to Coleco. Mike and I were supposed to design a fantasy-adventure game that played on a combination bar-code reader/speech-synthesizer device, but the device was never developed beyond a prototype. I eventually became director of game design at Coleco. In 1985, the video game biz went down the tubes, and I followed a varied path that had me freelancing for companies that made Dungeons & Dragons and for computer companies like Epyx, Interplay, Crossover Technologies and EA. Eventually, a fortunate meeting with another acquaintance developed into a job opportunity with id."

the street with no professional experience," Hirschmann says. "The key word is 'professional,' meaning that you've actually worked in person with other live human beings, not just designing levels alone in your basement. The design department touches every element of a game's production, so being organized with your work, communicating ideas clearly, and having a cheery personality (or at least one that allows you to get along with others) are all vital to your success.

But, how does one hone in on their skills as a level designer? What programs are needed? What about schooling? For these questions, we turned to the always affable Cliff Bleszinski, a 25-year-old level designer and game designer at Epic Games. You may have sampled his architectural artistry in games such as Unreal and Unreal Tournament.

Bleszinski says gamers should definitely start toying around with the free editors that ship with many games these days (see the sidebar on this). "Unreal Tournament ships with the Unreal Editor, which is the exact same tool that we used to build our content with and, with a little patience, you can be making great content like the pros." On professional art software, Bleszinski says 3D applications such as LightWave and 3D Studio MAX are great to learn, as well, as they are commonly used in many areas of the business, from 3D art to level design. Explains Bleszinski, "The job of the level designer is shifting to a balance between one half 3D artist and one half game designer. So, when I look for talent I look at levels that strike that perfect balance between great looks and playability. The designer must understand lighting, texturing and scene composition, as well as the more abstract gameplay notions such as flow and pacing. For instance, is the level too easy or too hard? Am I having a good time, or is my head getting stuck on torch holders that are too low as an alien is chewing on my leg?"

Bleszinski also adds patience and the ability to accept constructive criticism as two of the key attributes any level designer must possess. "Frequently, when a project is in development, the tools that the designer uses break or change," he says, "so it's key to stay cool under pressure and roll with the punches that the tumultuous development process can throw your way. It is also key to seek and take to heart suggestions from peers on the development team, as the best way to improve is to seek input and act upon it. Don't give up—if gaming is in your blood then you'll find a way in."

And last, but certainly not least, we hear from the lord himself—the Levelord, that is. As co-owner of Ritual Entertainment, Richard "Levelord" Gray has designed some of the best maps in the history of the first-person shooter in games such as Duke Nukem 3D, Sin and, most recently, Heavy Metal: F.A.K.K. 2. The Levelord decrees there is only one way to get in the door of a development studio—make levels! "I believe that if you asked most of the professionals," he says, "they would tell you that they made levels purely for the pleasure of making the levels, not simply to make a portfolio to get hired. They had the Passion."

Along with the passion, the Levelord says successful designers need to "not think within any boxes or restrict yourself to any borders. We are constantly pushing envelopes which, of course, is why the technology is constantly evolving. This is a very cool job, but it is a very demanding one time-wise. We seem to have little if any personal lives and spend most of our time at the office, or at home, working on game-related activities."

And lastly, if you have the passion, "you absolutely need to get your work out in the public's eye—on the Internet," says the Levelord. "Also be a little proactive and pursue game developers to look at your work... They will probably already know about you because they do have time to go online now and then and see their world. E-mail developers about your interest and be persistent. Do not be a pain in the arse, but don't be afraid to ask more than once, as this shows part of the Passion."

Marty O'Donnell, Total Audio

"After I got my master's degree in music composition, I broke into the music industry by working as a grip on the set of a commercial being shot in Chicago. I waited until I saw they needed some music, then went back to my friend's recording studio and did a quick demo and gave it to the director the next day. It was on the air that weekend..."

How to Get a Job at a Video Game Magazine

Want to break into the industry but none of these jobs sound right for you? Why not try for the glitz, glamour, sweat stains and 16-hour workdays of an *EGM* editor? Editor-in-Chief Joe Funk, who has hired just about all of us editor-types around here, explains which would-be editor tactics worked and which didn't over the years (and, yes, these are all true stories):

What worked:

- One guy sent me a full-size black-and-white picture of his mug. He looked cold and scared—like a deer in the headlights—so I felt sorry for him and hired him.
- Another guy told me he had never written anything before but worked part time at Babbages and loved gaming. We talked apes, chimps and other primates in his interview and the next thing I knew he was working here.
- One woman drove from Kansas to Chicago on a day's notice for an interview on her own dime.
- One of our art directors did a mockup of an *EGM* cover that was actually pretty good.
- Several of our guys worked on fansites or fanzines as a labor of love before coming here.

What didn't:

- One guy wore a really dirty shirt to the interview.
- Many people tell me they want to be screenwriters and are doing this mostly to pay bills.
- Some people mention games or systems in their cover letters and get the spellings and names wrong.
- Handwritten cover letters and résumés.
- Calling me at home. Please don't. I've had to have my number unlisted.

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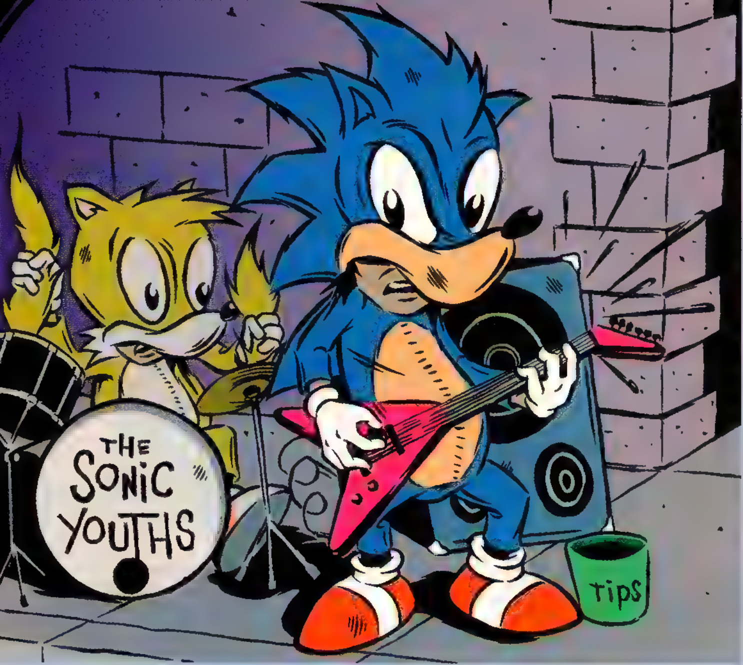


SOUND ENGINEER/MUSICIAN

This section is really two scooped into one to save on space, but they're both related to the game's audio, one of the most vital facets of the entire game-design process and experience. Audio, of course, refers to any and all stimuli heard throughout the game, be it music, voices or sound effects. Thanks to the advent of CD and DVD players in console systems and home PCs, game audio has become even more important.

Much like the other sections of this feature, there are probably as many ways to break into the industry as a sound technician and/or musician as there are examples of those who have done it, but the following looks at a couple of the bigger names in the biz. After writing and producing scores for TV, radio and film in the '80s, Marty O'Donnell became involved with Cyan and the ground-breaking PC adventure game Myst. He later worked on Riven: The Sequel to Myst (also for Cyan) and then a few titles for developers Bungie (namely, Myth: The Fallen Lords, Myth II: Soulblighter, Oni and Halo). O'Donnell says budding sound and music creators "should have great facility with current sound and music programs, as well as a good demo CD." Then, O'Donnell says you should find out who makes the hiring decisions and send your demo and a short letter of introduction to that person. "Be persistent. The worse you can do is annoy someone, but if they're not aware of you, you'll never get the job anyway," says O'Donnell. O'Donnell says when he's looking for talent, he pays attention to "original music, stellar production values, and unique sound design." An education or background in music and audio production is a must, and previous experience in game audio development is a definite plus.

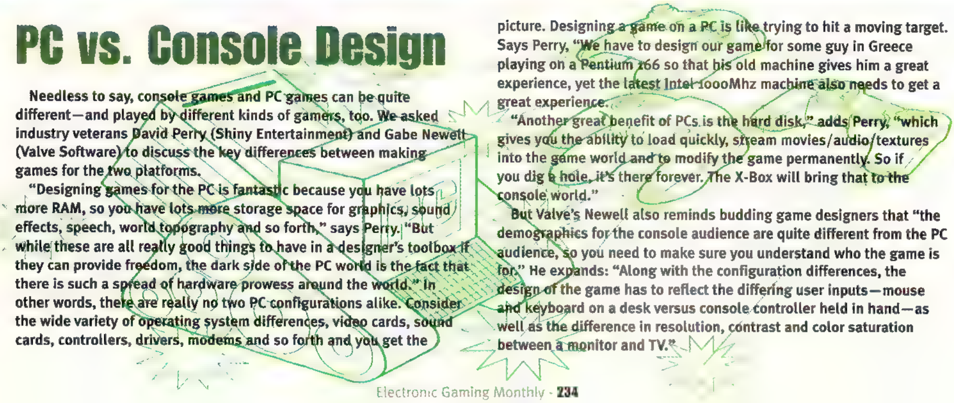
As far as gear is concerned, O'Donnell says access to electronic and acoustic musical instruments and recording equipment is extremely important. "Learn how to record sound and music. A computer is a

QUICK TIPS:

- **Create a demo CD and distribute it to developers, publishers or anyone else related to the production process**
- **Learn your art—take classes or lessons and go to workshops whenever possible**
- **Be proficient at computer, analog and digital sound synthesis**
- **Learn to play or at least arrange several instruments and recognize their musical properties**

Salary: $50,000 to $100,000
Crucial Tools: Pro Tools, Peak, SoundForge, Cubase, Studio Vision

PC vs. Console Design



Needless to say, console games and PC games can be quite different—and played by different kinds of gamers, too. We asked industry veterans David Perry (Shiny Entertainment) and Gabe Newell (Valve Software) to discuss the key differences between making games for the two platforms.

"Designing games for the PC is fantastic because you have lots more RAM, so you have lots more storage space for graphics, sound effects, speech, world topography and so forth," says Perry. "But while these are all really good things to have in a designer's toolbox if they can provide freedom, the dark side of the PC world is the fact that there is such a spread of hardware prowess around the world." In other words, there are really no two PC configurations alike. Consider the wide variety of operating system differences, video cards, sound cards, controllers, drivers, modems and so forth and you get the picture. Designing a game on a PC is like trying to hit a moving target. Says Perry, "We have to design our game for some guy in Greece playing on a Pentium 166 so that his old machine gives him a great experience, yet the latest Intel 1000Mhz machine also needs to get a great experience.

"Another great benefit of PCs is the hard disk," adds Perry, "which gives you the ability to load quickly, stream movies/audio/textures into the game world and to modify the game permanently. So if you dig a hole, it's there forever. The X-Box will bring that to the console world."

But Valve's Newell also reminds budding game designers that "the demographics for the console audience are quite different from the PC audience, so you need to make sure you understand who the game is for." He expands: "Along with the configuration differences, the design of the game has to reflect the differing user inputs—mouse and keyboard on a desk versus console controller held in hand—as well as the difference in resolution, contrast and color saturation between a monitor and TV."

DigiPen: The Ultimate Game School

While more and more technical colleges around the country are offering game programming and game art courses, DigiPen Institute of Technology is the oldest and most recognized within the video-gaming community. DigiPen Corporation was founded by Claude Comair in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada in 1988 and specialized in 3D computer animation and special effects. In 1991, they had a meeting with Nintendo of America (NoA) and discussed the possibility of DigiPen offering educational programs in video game programming. This idea became reality in September of 1994, when DigiPen started the first-known computer-game programming program. DigiPen soon expanded the two-year course to a four-year bachelors degree program. In February, 1998, DigiPen opened a larger campus in Redmond, Washington., right near Nintendo of America's offices.

This past July, DigiPen had its first batch of graduates from the school's four-year Baccalaureate Degree of Science in Real Time Interactive Simulation. Allegedly, many of the students have already secured positions with top companies such as Interplay, Dreamworks Interactive and KnowWonder.

To learn more about DigPen and its courses, visit them on the Web at www.digipen.edu or call 425-558-0299. It's not an easy school to get into, so good luck.

must of course, but many people make the mistake of thinking that a computer is all they need. Many consumer computer audio programs and hardware just aren't good enough to produce professional-sounding audio. I still believe that the Mac is the best computer platform for MIDI and audio recording. Programs like Pro Tools, Peak, Performer and Studio Vision are just some of the most common programs found in many professional studios. On the PC side, Cakewalk and SoundForge are excellent."

In closing, O'Donnell says to practice, practice, practice: "Take lessons, go to music school, intern at a recording studio, play games and develop audio with friends who are programmers. And lastly, come up with some ways of designing sound effects that sound different than the expected."

Matthew Lee Johnston is another respected audio engineer who has worked on many stellar games in Microsoft's PC lineup over the past five years. His last few titles were Midtown Madness (1 and 2), Combat Flight Simulator (1 and 2) and Flight Simulator 2000. Johnston says the romantic aspects of the industry have been played up to make people believe that fun takes precedence over business and money seems to be of no object. If you believe that, you'll be sorely disappointed. "Naturally this ideal environment appeals to the creative person, because it smacks of freedom," Johnston tells us, "but this is not the reality. Making the transition from being purely creative on your own terms to making compromises in your creative output based on someone else's vision of what's best for the product can be extremely difficult."

> **"Be persistent. The worse you can do is annoy someone, but if they're not aware of you, you'll never get the job anyway."**
>
> **—Total Audio's Marty O'Donnell**

As with O'Donnell, Johnston also believes keeping up your "chops" as a musician is the best way to prepare for a job in the industry, along with honing skills on PC or Mac audio authoring tools and other related technologies. Field recording experience is also a plus. Second, he believes an understanding of the medium—to know the platforms and their limitations—is paramount. And lastly, you have to be as much of an expert at listening as you are at making noise. "Listening is half of the job—listening to people carefully as they painfully try to explain (using visual metaphors, of course) what they envision the audio landscape of the product to sound like."

But what about actually getting in the door to these companies? Is it doable? Enter Chance Thomas, president of the HUGEsound Network, who has worked on many PC games while at Sierra (including a fully orchestrated soundtrack for Quest for Glory V, which was also released as a separate CD). He now runs the HUGEsound Network, a group of talented musicians and audio engineers. "It seems like developers and publishers alike are always looking for full-time employees in audio," begins Thomas. "In the past couple of months alone I have seen audio positions available at Angel Studios, Microsoft, Ion Storm, Turbine Entertainment and lots of start-ups."

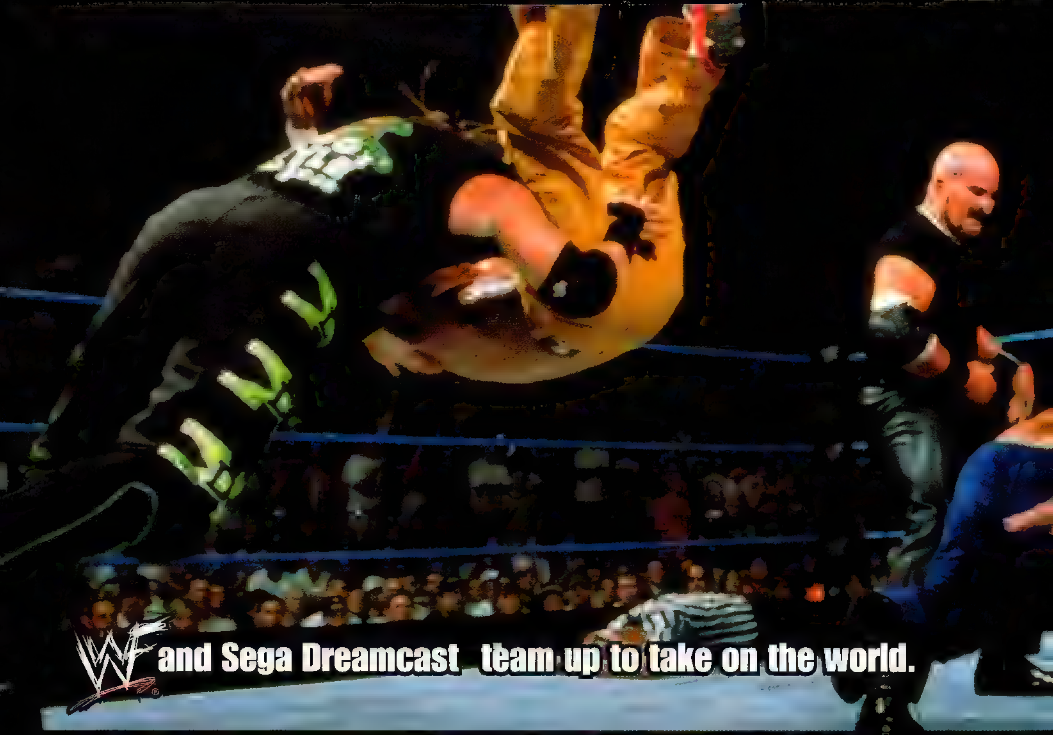
Breaking in as a freelancer may be getting harder. Thomas explains, "The bar has certainly been raised substantially over the past two to three years in terms of who the competition is and what can be expected from game audio, particularly on the music side. Today I also have to compete against Trent Reznor, David Bowie, Yes and Motley Crüe. That would be tough for someone new in the business."

If the competition doesn't scare you from taking the plunge, Thomas advises, "Play lots of games and pay attention to how the music is used in those games. Make mental and written notes of what works and what doesn't, and learn why it does or doesn't work. Next, dedicate yourself to learning everything you can about the art, craft and technology of music. And lastly, put together a killer demo reel and blanket the industry."

The last audio specialist we'll hear from is the ever-colorful Tommy Tallarico. Over the past nine years, he has written soundtracks to such titles as Earthworm Jim 1 & 2, Aladdin, Cool Spot, The Terminator, Madden Football, the Test Drive series, MDK and Tomorrow Never Dies. We asked Tallarico what the first thing a budding musician should do to get a job at a game-development studio. He says the freelance route isn't a bad way to go. "[Freelance] is definitely going to be the future of our industry," Tallarico says. "But it's not for everyone! Some people like the stability of a weekly paycheck, benefits, not paying for your own gear, etc. If that's the case then an in-house job is more for you. Just realize that you'll never make the really big bucks."

Either way, though, Tallarico says to put together a great demo CD of your very best stuff and to make sure to put your contact info directly on the CD. He also suggests you include a short bio or résumé, and make sure to show how much you love video games. "Once you have your package together," he advises, "make about a hundred of them and send them out to every single video game publisher and developer you can find on the Internet—you'll want to send them to either a music supervisor or even game producers." Tallarico also reminds musicians/sound designers to go to every video-game trade show you can. He says, "You'll meet more people there in three days than you'll meet all year long."

Do you have the grapefruits to get in the ring with these guys?


WWF and Sega Dreamcast team up to take on the world.

Nine WWF Superstars in the ring at once.
This is gonna get ugly.

Can I handle the heat? Stay out of the kitchen.
Or the boiler room. Or the parking lot.

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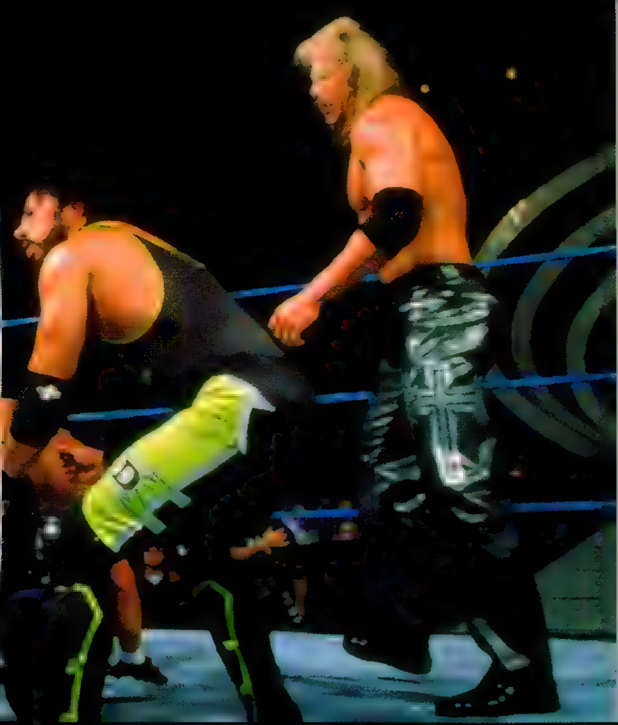
TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Animated Violence
Suggestive Themes

Sega Dreamcast



How to tell if you re ready for WWF Royal Rumble®.

- ☑ You spend hours in the mirror working on raising one eyebrow.
- ☑ You call co-workers "Jabronis."
- ☑ You've created your own entrance video for whenever you enter a room.
- ☑ Your apartment is furnished with metal chairs and cheap buffet tables.
- ☑ You give your girlfriend the "stinky-face."
- ☑ You've rigged your apartment with elaborate pyrotechnics for dramatic effect.
- ☑ Finally having a WWF game for your Sega Dreamcast brings a tear to your eye.

PRESS START

All s fair in the WWF. When you re gettin whupped, call in a partner to help you out.

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Cliff Bleszinski, Epic Games

"I wanted to make games ever since the age of 6, when I first saw Space Invaders at my friend's house on the Atari 2600. It has been my lifelong dream to do what I do, and I don't ever anticipate doing anything else. I began to make my own games, first on "construction sets" that were available on my Apple IIc and Commodore 64, then by programming and drawing all the graphics myself. I sent a computer adventure title I built to Tim Sweeney (Lead Programmer of the Unreal Technology and founder of Epic Games) and he liked what he saw. The rest is history."

GAME DESIGNER

QUICK TIPS:

- **Work with an artist to forge a visual demo of your ideas and send it to developers and producers**
- **Get professional design experience as soon as possible, even if that means starting very small and working your way up (start as a tester, for example)**
- **Play a lot of high-quality games to learn how to achieve an overall balance and flow to your game designs**
- **Education in artistic design and screenwriting can be helpful**

Salary: $35,000 to $90,000

OK, we've now come to the end of our long journey toward breaking into the fast-paced gaming industry, and we've saved the most sought-after—at least by our readers—position for last. Though definitions may vary, a lead game designer is someone who must sketch out the game from start to finish and must oversee the entire game design process, including its art, programming, level and mission designing, and so on. In many cases, the lead designer is the person who came up with the concept for the game to begin with. Needless to say, this is a very important and respected position to hold at a game development studio.

Because a game designer must be a Jack (or Jacqueline) of all trades, most newcomers to the game industry do not get hired as a game designer right off the bat. Instead, they apply for another position and work up the proverbial ladder from there.

Jason Rubin, co-founder and president of Naughty Dog Inc., has been making games for the past 14 years with his partner in crime, Andy Gavin. Naughty Dog's last four titles—Crash Bandicoot, Crash Bandicoot: Cortex Strikes Back, Crash Bandicoot: Warped and Crash Team Racing—have sold over 20 million units collectively, thus making Naughty Dog the most successful independent developer in America. In Rubin's opinion, it is quite expensive to start your own development house these days, so getting a job at an existing company may be the better way to go. Then, once you've gained considerable experience and contacts, you may choose to leave to start your own company down the road.

"Just as programming is learned over the years, design is not something that you are born with," begins Rubin. "Everyone should expect to start at the bottom. Most designers I know of started as game testers and moved up after a few long hard years after they proved that they knew what they were talking about. Then—after showing their worth on a few projects—they were given projects to manage themselves as an associate producer. Every designer I've hired has done design for at least one other company and for multiple successful products before coming to Naughty Dog."

Rubin says that a person who wants to be a game designer should "have the ability to translate seemingly immeasurable elements of gameplay, such as frustration and fun, into numbers." He offers the following examples: "A game designer must know 'x' deaths in this area would be frustrating, 'y' lives is too few and 'z' would be too many and make the level too easy."

Rubin also urges budding game designers to "accept criticism, to your résumé, to your beliefs, to your opinions." And you'll need to understand that the gaming industry is not non-profit; publishers need to make money. "Just because your idea is 'artistic,' a company won't likely make it if the audience will be tiny," adds Rubin. And you must acknowledge that large teams make games these days, and large teams like to have input.

Is getting a job as a designer in the U.S. any easier or harder than in Japan? We asked Shinji Mikami, Manager of R&D 4th Development Team at Capcom, who is responsible in part for the coveted Resident Evil series. He responds by saying he doesn't know if there's a difference in getting a job as a game designer between the two countries, but insists creativity is something he looks for when hiring, and hey, that's universal. "Over everything, he or she needs to be a

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person who loves creating things," begins Mikami. "He or she also needs to have strong sensibility about things. I also believe it is important what the person has seen and experienced before the age of 13 or so. This is where creativity and imagination begin. It is also very helpful to have some art skill if you want to be a game director."

Furthermore, Mikami says he puts the most value on whether the person seems to be easy to work with or not, and has good qualities as a person. "I also make sure the person has at least one excellent skill," he says. "Without one very solid skill and good people skills, is difficult to succeed in this industry since creating a game is a team effort."

But Mikami and Rubin broke into the gaming industry over a decade ago. Is it easier or tougher now? For this, we asked a true game-design veteran—David Perry—president of Shiny Entertainment, which created such memorable games as Earthworm Jim, MDK and Messiah. Next year marks Perry's 20th year in the biz.

"It's a lot, lot, lot easier now because of all the help that you can get via the Internet," Perry tells us, "and there's also tons of great books on the subject. In the old days, I had to make my games in assembly language by poking numbers into RAM by hand before commercial assemblers were available. If I wanted art, I had to write my own art package or draw it on graph paper like everyone else." Perry says today's game-design tools are helpful, but then games aren't that simple anymore. "They're turning into epics. Making them has become a way of life instead of just a hobby."

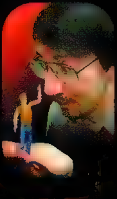
Perry's advice on getting a job as a game designer is to make your ideas visual. "If I pop in a VHS tape and see something that looks interesting, you will have my attention a lot faster than making me read a 200-page document with numerical tables and endless character bios," admits Perry. "To do this, use the Internet to team up with a good artist, and even programmer, who shares your vision and lay out your plan in the form of a visual demonstration. The design on paper should then accompany the tape. If the tape looks great, send it to the executive producer at the companies you would like to publish it. But wait 'til you have it looking really sweet."

The last famous game designer we chatted with is at this very moment enjoying the fact his latest PC game, The Sims, is the number one-selling game of the year thus far. We're talking about the one and only Will Wright, who says while it may be hard to break in as a "lone wolf" programmer/designer as he did 18 years ago, there are many more ways to get a job now than ever before. Wright suggests applying as a tester or low-level producer, and learn as you go.

Mirroring Rubin's sentiment, Wright agrees it is very difficult to get a starting job as a designer with no experience. "A designer needs to understand all parts of the development process: programming, art, production," he explains. "On top of that you need to have a good sense of the design tools and process: prototyping, playtesting, design-risk assessment. Probably the best way to get into a design role is to start somewhere else on a production team (as a producer, artist or programmer) and learn the ropes of design by working closely with the designers on your project. See what works and what doesn't. Learning how not to design a game is just as important as knowing how to design one."

David Perry, Shiny Entertainment

“When I started, there were no games in the stores. You had to buy a book or magazine and then type the program into your computer to play it. I sent my games to be published in magazines and was extremely proud to see my work in lovely black "ink." Little did I know I was actually getting paid for this. So the checks started arriving ($50 a game!!!) and I was hooked.”



Will Wright, Maxis Software

“I taught myself to program on the Apple II. When the Commodore 64 first came out I bought one and learned it as fast as I could. I then created my first game on it (Raid on Bungeling Bay) and then sold the publishing rights to Broderbund Software. The Nintendo version of this game sold 750,000 units in Japan.”

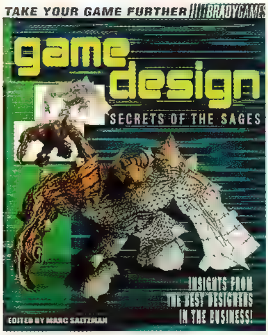
Richard "Levelord" Gray

“Like most of us in the action genre of computer games, it was through the Gateway of DOOM. I don't think I know a single person who entered this industry in the mid-1990s who didn't cross that gate. What a great game and what a great time—DOOM, Nine Inch Nails and easy access to the Internet! Anyone with the passion (or curse, if you butter your toast on the other side) could cast their magic, whether it be code, levels or art, and send it out to the entire world. I personally made four DOOM levels called GrayDOOM and uploaded them to CompuServe's Action Forum. It wasn't long before I was noticed and hired to do contract levels for Blood. Those led to full-time work on Duke Nukem, which in turn got me here...an owner at Ritual Entertainment.”

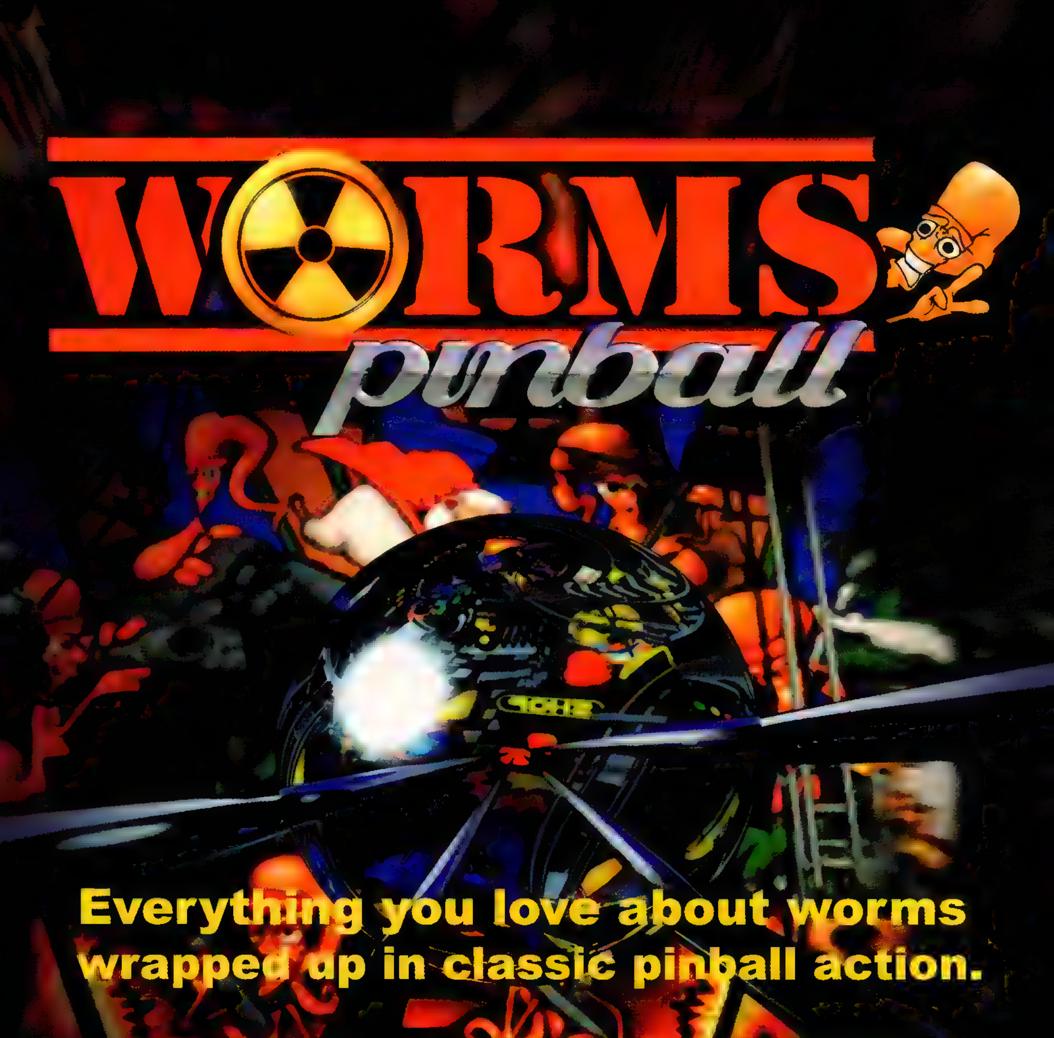
Game Design:
Secrets of the Sages

OK, here comes the shameless plug, but I take pride in the fact there is no other book in the world like mine. *Game Design: Secrets of the Sages, Second Edition* (BradyGAMES) is a 460-plus book on how to create the perfect console or computer game, as well as how to best break into the exploding gaming industry.

I had the distinct pleasure of interviewing over 150 of the world's best-known, respected and loved game designers, including Shigeru Miyamoto, Jason Rubin, Shinji Mikami, Sid Meier, Peter Molyneux, David Perry, Hironobu Sakaguchi, Richard Garriott, Alexey Pajitnov, Warren Spector and Will Wright, just to name a few. Reading this book is like sitting at a roundtable with the best in the biz, all offering their individual tips, tricks and techniques on how to create a perfect game.



Game Design: Secrets of the Sages, Second Edition is available as a stand-alone book, or you'll find it as a bonus inside the Game Programming Starter Kit 4.0 (Macmillan Software), a software package designed to help you make your own games (it even includes a C++ compiler).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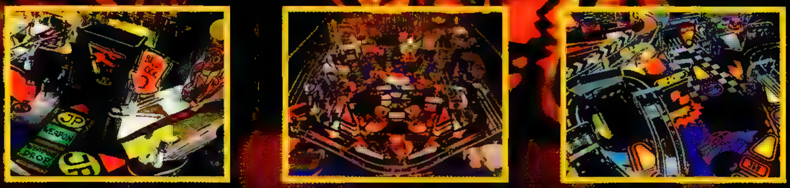

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WORMS
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PlayStation

An invitation to Mars isn't an honor...

The newest addition to the Armored Core series allows you to go head-to-head in relentless battles using an endless combination of parts. Never before have you been given so many options for configuring your AC unit for non-stop action – especially with graphics that dazzle the

PlayStation.2
NTSC U/C
ARMORED CORE 2
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imagination. Choose between solo missions or vs. friends in 2-player split screen or linked combat sorties.

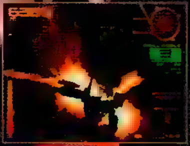
New Planet – New Weapons – New Missions

...it's a death sentence.

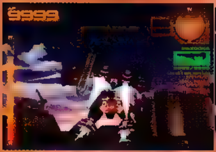
- More than 200 customizable parts available – featuring Interior Equipment & Extension Packs.
- Enter all new Arenas to challenge over 45 menacing AC's.
- Over-Boost Propulsion generates lightning speed for AC units.
- More than 35 Single-Player Missions and 11 VS. Battle Stages.

"Mech combat at its finest"

– PSM 100% Independent PlayStation Magazine



Wield an energy blade in close-quarters combat

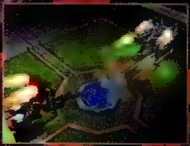


Enhanced propulsion technology

Challenge a friend in 2-player split-screen action

Destroy!!!

Customize your A.C. for maximum damage



Replays highlight your destructive kills

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Review Crew

This Month...

Ladies and gentlemen: the first PS2 reviews (applause). That's right, after months of waiting, the first PS2 review games finally started to trickle in, and they did pretty well: Three of the five we looked at received *EGM* gold awards. Not every company was able to get us their launch games in time for this issue (including Sony), so look for many more reviews next month, including Silpheed, Tekken Tag Tournament, NHL 2001, Evergrace and Armored Core 2. DC lovers don't despair—we're busy playing NFL 2K1 for a full report next issue too; 'til then watch for DeanEGM, KraigEGM, JoeEGM and DanEGM, kickin' ass and chewin' bubblegum on a server near you.

Our Philosophy

10 9 8 7 6 **5** 4 3 2 1 **0**

EGM rates games based on how they compare with other titles on the same system. The highest score we'll give a game is a 10. When a game receives a 10, you can rest assured it's one of the best games ever made—a revolutionary title that truly stands above everything else in its genre for its time. At the other end of the spectrum sits the lowest score a game can receive: a 0.0. This is the kind of game you want to avoid at all costs. It's pure crap, as our scale (above) explains. In the middle lies the average grade, 5.0. We repeat: 5.0 IS AN AVERAGE GRADE. Simple, ain't it?

Our Awards

Platinum Awards go to games that get three 10's, the best and rarest review a game can get.

Gold Awards go to games whose average score equals 9.0 or higher.

Games that average at least an 8.0 receive **Silver Awards.**

The Players....

Crispin Boyer

After playing Sydney 2000, Virtua Athlete 2K and ESPN Track & Field for days, Cris has declared November to be National Carpal Tunnel Syndrome Month.

Favorite Genres
Action, Adventure

Joe Funk

The Toad issue is rearing its ugly head again as Joe continues on his Mario Tennis binge. Maybe if he can get a peek up Toad's skirt...or shorts...

Favorite Genres
Sports, Action

Dean Hager

Dean wasted no time taking over Shawn's prime cubicle by the windows. He's sorry to see him leave but hey, a window seat is a window seat.

Favorite Genres
Sports, Racing

Chris Johnston

Now that Space World has restored Chris' faith in Nintendo, he's decided to go into hibernation until E3 when he'll get a real look at what the system can do.

Favorite Genres
Adventure, Puzzle, Music

Jonathan Dudlak

Having infiltrated the core of *EGM*'s operation with his tactical journalism, Jon is trading in his Civic on a Metal Gear unit to make the commute more exciting.

Favorite Genres
Fighting, Shooter, Action

Kraig Kujawa

Kraig has been playing games involving athletes in tight clothes. There's the women in Sydney 2000, the girls in Swing Away and the men in Madden 2001.

Favorite Genres
Sports, Strategy

Dan Leahy

Dan's been "working from home" a lot since NFL 2K1 went online. If you catch him in some chat room please tell him to get his sorry ass to work.

Favorite Genres
Sports, Action, Fighting

Mark MacDonald

Ever-a seen-sa Mark has been a-playin' de import Paypah Mario, he canna stoppa talkin' like a-dis. "Please. Someone a-kill me" he says. Hoo hah!

Favorite Genres
Action, Adventure, RPG

James Mielke

The Milkman has, inexplicably, found himself very, very single this month. All supermodels are encouraged to apply for the vacant girlfriend slot NOW!

Favorite Genres
RPG, Fighting

Andrew Pfister

As a student of Political Science, Andrew is keeping a close eye on this year's election. His assessment of the presidential race? E-Sak all the way.

Favorite Genres
RPG, Action

Greg Sewart

Greg's got an unhealthy infatuation with Elise from SSX. The way to his heart must be a snowboard with a big maple leaf on it... yikes. Damn Canuck!

Favorite Genres
Racing, RPG, Adventure

Ryan Lockhart

Ryan went to Las Vegas to play some Smuggler's Run, broke a real jeep during the event, learned how to play craps, and quickly lost 200 bucks. Hurrah!

Favorite Genres
Adventure, RPG, Action

Game of the Month

EGM PLATINUM
EDITORS' CHOICE AWARD

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2 pg.260

Sound the trumpets! The sequel to Activision's oft-imitated skating classic is only the fifth game ever granted the coveted *EGM* Platinum award. It didn't come easy—after the reviews were turned in, a heated debate ensued here at the *EGM* offices as to whether or not Tony 2 was fit to rub shoulders with the likes of Metal Gear Solid, Zelda (N64), Soul Calibur and Gran Turismo 2. But when all three reviewers stood by their scores, and when we realized that the only people fighting the award hadn't even played the game (or even the first THPS, so shut up Chris and Mark), cooler heads prevailed and Tony 2 got our highest honor. Congrats and thanks to Neversoft for one helluva game!

EDITORS' CURRENT FAVES

1	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2	Activision
2	SSX	Electronic Arts
3	Madden NFL 2001	EA Sports
4	Dino Crisis 2	Capcom
5	Mario Tennis	Nintendo
6	Test Drive Le Mans	Infogrames
7	Virtua Tennis	Sega
8	Chrono Cross	Square EA
9	Ridge Racer V	Namco
10	Turok 3	Acclaim

D2

Publisher:	Sega
Developer:	Warp
Featured In:	*EGM* #133
Players:	1
Supports:	VGA Box, Jump Pack
Best Feature:	Creepy story line
Worst Feature:	Tedious gameplay
Web Site:	www.sega.com

D2 is a strange little game. While technically a sequel, the only thing it bears in common with the original is a creepy story line and the main character Laura. After years in the making, Warp has ditched the full-on CG FMV for a real-time cinematic approach. That means everything that used to be prerendered is now done using the game engine. Funny thing is it really doesn't make much difference since all the events are scripted, and **the game moves at a Myst-like pace**. Supplementing the glacial tempo of the game is a third-person exploratory mode, where you can actually move a 3D Laura through a beautiful snow-covered Canadian environment. The hitch is that you run into "random" battles along the way that switch you to a first-person perspective. While it sounds like fun, these battles cease to be random when they occur every 15 virtual feet. You'd think the snowmobile would scoot you around faster and farther, but all it achieves is getting you caught in battles that much faster. The gunfights themselves are agonizingly repetitive with the same few monsters showing up time after time. You can shoot rabbits and fry 'em up with your cooker, but health canisters are everywhere anyway, so why bother? The story line is enjoyably bizarre in that uniquely Japanese way, but the pretentious ending feels like Warp ran out of ideas. If you're interested I'd definitely rent it first. **Milkman**

Ah...snow-covered mountains, single-room shacks, people "blossoming" into monsters left and right. Good ol' Canada, how I miss her! **This game is not D, it's more like D meets Parasite Eve.** When Laura's indoors the game feels a bit like Warp's original 3DO title, but outdoors she's got monsters to shoot, vast mountain ranges to navigate, and animals to hunt. It's an odd mix that seems pretty unintuitive at first, but grows on you as the very disturbing plot of D2 begins to develop. Although Sega screwed up the experience with horrible dubbing and a comical attempt at censoring the more inappropriate sections of the game, D2's still worth playing. **Greg**

This is a strange game. Wait, that's an understatement. D2 is one of the most screwed-up games ever made; Sega toned it down a bit from the Japanese version, and the game suffers for it. **The one true thing D2 has going for it is its incredibly strong sense of the surreal.** And while that feeling still exists, it doesn't have quite the impact found in the original release, bringing the problematic gameplay closer to the forefront. The combat system is horrible and you're often just walking around in a very boring snowy landscape. D2 is still strange, wacky and wonderfully unsettling—just not as much so as it once was. And that's kind of sad. **Ryan**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Demolition Racer–No Exit

Publisher:	Infogrames
Developer:	Pitbull Syndicate
Featured In:	*EGM* #133
Players:	1-2
Supports:	Jump Pack
Best Feature:	Insane gameplay
Worst Feature:	Gets old kind of fast
Web Site:	www.infogrames.com

One thing's for sure: If nothing else, Demolition Racer–No Exit is a great outlet for all that built-up aggression you've been holding onto. Really, **slamming a car into a wall and watching it explode is a great feeling**—something I wish every racing game let you do. Most other racers punish you for tapping the back of an opponent's car, or giving them a friendly nudge into a pylon, but in Demolition Racer you're expected to. Actually, you can't really win the race without being a bit nasty (you get points for the damage you cause), which, just like the PlayStation version this game is based on, makes for a super-fun competition. Unfortunately, also like the PlayStation version, the idea gets old kind of fast. New features added since the original release include a new game aptly titled the "Demolition Mode" in which 16 cars face off in one arena. The tracks have been redesigned, new cars have been added, and even the soundtrack has been upgraded by adding remixed tunes along with the original music by Fear Factory. But easily the greatest draw for Demolition Racer–No Exit is the visuals. Yes, of course you'd expect the Dreamcast version of a game to look better than the PlayStation one. But really now, this game moves almost too smooth, even in two-player mode. Overall, Demolition Racer is a good game, but one I'd recommend renting before you consider buying. It's fun, just not that deep... **Ryan**

Like the Destruction Derby series, DR offers you car-wrecking action in a high-speed-chase kind of way. **The action is fast and it controls well.** The game looks very nice, even in two-player mode, with little loss of detail or framerate. While the car models lack some finesse, there are a large number of them on screen, with little to no compromise in the gameplay. The extra modes are nice, but the multiplayer stuff isn't as compelling as it could be. The different "power-ups" can be confusing, often causing you major damage when you mistake one for something good. Not a game with staying power, but certainly worth spending a few days with. **Milkman**

This game's attitude is apparent right from the intro screens. DR fills a crash-'em and smash-'em niche on DC quite admirably, and also has a solid driving feel to it. But like the title implies, players are rewarded more for ramming their cars into other drivers and taking them out than they are for finishing first. I found this aspect particularly appealing because **it tapped into a dark fantasy of mine about slow-moving cars riding in the passing lane.** There is a nice variety of vehicles, the tracks aren't too hard or too easy, and the replays are almost as fun to watch as the game is to play. Some minor pop-up didn't get in the way of the fun. **Joe**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Sega GT

Publisher:	Sega
Developer:	Sega
Featured In:	*EGM* #130
Players:	1-2
Supports:	VMU, Jump Pack
Best Feature:	Fine-tune every car
Worst Feature:	Game feels dated
Web Site:	www.sega.com

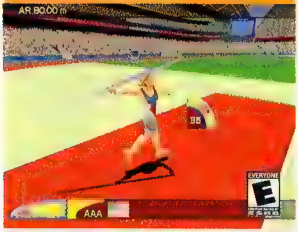
If only Sega GT had come out before Gran Turismo 2, or even just sometime earlier this year. The game was released in Japan what seems like eons ago, and it shows. Graphically it just doesn't measure up to today's Dreamcast standards. It also doesn't come close to the variety of cars found in GT2, and the 100 or so cars that are in the game suffer from some questionable models (the Viper looks more like a Supra to me). Of course, this is a Sega racer, which usually means there's something unique and exciting waiting for the discerning player. Sega GT doesn't disappoint. **The control is arguably more realistic than Gran Turismo 2**, though first-timers will find the cars very "floaty" and next to impossible to handle at high speeds. Just remember to slow down *before* each turn and you should be fine. It's one of those things you'll either love or hate, so I suggest renting this game before plunking down the purchase price. Another cool aspect is the corporate sponsorships: win McDonald's or eXcite.com sponsored races and every time you win from that point on they'll give you some extra cash over the regular purse. Even minor adjustments to your car make very noticeable handling differences, unlike GT2. And finally, there's the Carrozerria, a place where you can build your own dream machine from the ground up. In many ways Sega GT seems to miss the mark, but it also sets a few important precedents. **Greg**

Sega GT is not in the same league as Gran Turismo. It tries, but unfortunately it can't measure up in one important category: handling. Initially you're given a moderate selection of stock vehicles, but sadly they all hug the track about as well as your granddad's '58 Buick. Even the high-end cars sway and roll with the slightest nudge of the stick. Thankfully, with mods, you can tighten things up significantly, but given the game's obvious devotion to realism I find it hard to believe that even stock vehicles would slop all over the road like this. Still, **patient racers will like tinkering with the vast selection of cars**; Casual fans should definitely rent first. **Dean**

Even though the Dreamcast is a superior system, Sega GT might as well have been called Gran Turismo lite. **It shamelessly tries to imitate Sony's killer racing title but falls short** in nearly every mark—even the graphics. Sure, it looks better than your average PS game, but not by much. Some of the worst tracks are so cluttered with lens flares and special effects that it becomes distracting to drive on them. There's lots of cars to choose from, but most people will only recognize a few, and all of them feel floaty and difficult to control. Sadly, these flaws make GT a game that only racing enthusiasts will have patience for. **Kraig**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Sydney 2000



Publisher:	Eidos Interactive
Developer:	Attention to Detail
Featured In:	*EGM* #131
Players:	1-4
Supports:	Jump Pack
Best Feature:	Good staple of events
Worst Feature:	Subpar graphics
Web Site:	www.eidos.com

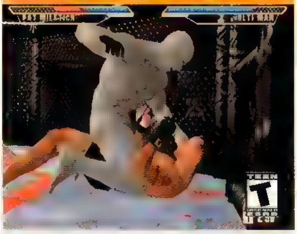
It's funny how this works out, but **Sydney 2000 seems like Virtua Athlete's evil twin.** The two are almost an exact antithesis of one another. Whereas Virtua has a shallow pool of events and controls simple enough for a toddler (but still fun), this game has plenty of events (12 in all) and clunky controls. Kayaking, diving, skeet shooting and track & field—you name it, Sydney 2000's got it. One thread common to all the events, however, is the subpar graphics. Almost everything in the game looks eerily sterile. The environments have a dull look to them, and even simple objects (such as the field) have occasional clipping. What's worse are the disproportionate athlete models. Not only are they devoid of much detail, but the blobby human builds just don't look right (these are supposed to be athletes?) and their faces look ridiculous. Any way you slice it, these visuals are not up to Dreamcast standards. Aesthetics aside, there are a few good events in the game, such as the Platform Diving that lets you choose your type of plunge and the javelin, which is pretty simple but entertaining. Another disappointment is the training mode where you can build up your player's abilities. Here, you work your athlete out in this weird techno "Virtual Gym," complete with annoying music that seems totally inappropriate. It's just a microcosm of what's wrong with Sydney 2000 even though it is a tolerable game. **Kraig**

We've got three button-slapping Olympic titles heading to the Dreamcast: this game, Virtua Athlete 2K and ESPN International Track & Field. Sydney 2000 belongs at the bottom of the heap. **You get a decent number of events, but only a few deliver any thrills**—namely the javelin throw, high dive and weight lift (you really feel like you've lifted a load after tap, tap, tapping through that event). The sim-type Olympic mode offers a few innovative ideas, including the ability to build up your character through training mini-games. It's just too bad that most of the events are so dull, and that the game is devoid of personality and looks so blah. **Crispin**

I'm a sucker for Konami's track and field games; I've enjoyed 'em all. Unfortunately Sydney 2000 is a poor example of the genre. **In general, it lacks finish on all fronts.** The animation is well below-average compared to other DC sports titles. The gameplay mechanics are similar to the T&F archetype but control is not as precise. Plus, some of the events (like the 100 meter swim) are so ridiculously long you'll get a fore-arm cramp before you finish the race. Oh yeah, the Olympic Mode forces you to complete a lot of goofy exercises to gain endurance. It's a good idea but the graphics in those sections are hideous. I can't recommend Sydney 2000. **Dean**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
4	4	4	5

Ultimate Fighting Championship



Publisher:	Crave Entertainment
Developer:	Anchor
Featured In:	*EGM* #133
Players:	1-2
Supports:	Jump Pack
Best Feature:	Realistic graphics
Worst Feature:	High frustration level
Web Site:	www.cravegames.com

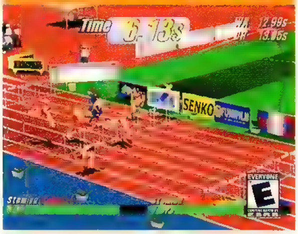
UFC is one of those games that's only worth playing against a friend, because playing against the AI isn't fun, it's just frustrating—and you can't trash talk the computer except by yelling expletives at the screen. Almost everything, with the exception of the fighting engine and graphics (which are detailed and realistic) **feels like it was being held back in hopes of adding more features to a sequel.** This game just doesn't have the amount of features or polish that it needed. Since UFC fighting is very different from wrestling, you'd think that there'd be a detailed tutorial mode or at least a decent moves list included so you could jump right in and fight. No such luck. There are also only a scant few body types in the Create-A-Fighter mode, so you can't put a spitting image of yourself in the Octagon. You unlock moves and the bodies of the fighters themselves to use by working through the one-player game with each character, but what fun is that? If only it had the customization depth of WWF Wrestlemania to boost replay value. Since most of the gameplay is dependent on countering (by pressing buttons at the right time), you have a chance against a human, but against the AI it's almost hopeless. It also would've been nice to be able to turn off submission holds—the infuriating "Tap Out" happens way too often. Rent with friends first. **Chris**

With over-the-top fighters like Marvel vs Capcom 2 dominating the Dreamcast scene these days, it's refreshing to play a realistic brawler that's just as addicting. The 22 UFC fighters may not have the distinct personalities of Capcom characters, but they do give the player access to several different fighting styles and look great in the ring. Punchy sound effects and smooth visuals make the fighting come alive, with quick load times between matches. Unfortunately **the single-player vs. CPU matches are a bit stiff and sometimes very frustrating**, but games like this are made for two-player action, and that's where I had fun with UFC. **Jonathan**

Even though there's plenty of depth to this Crave fighting game, it really doesn't surface unless you play against another human opponent. Matches against the computer are pretty boring: You slap each other around a bit until both of you grapple, then if you counter you win. If you don't, the CPU usually puts you down for the count. Since humans make mistakes, grappling is more forgiving and pulls more of the game's depth and subtleties into the matches—plus **it's just fun sitting on your opponent and slapping the crap out of him.** It's a unique brand of brawling, but it's only fun with someone who makes mistakes. **Kraig**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Virtua Athlete 2000



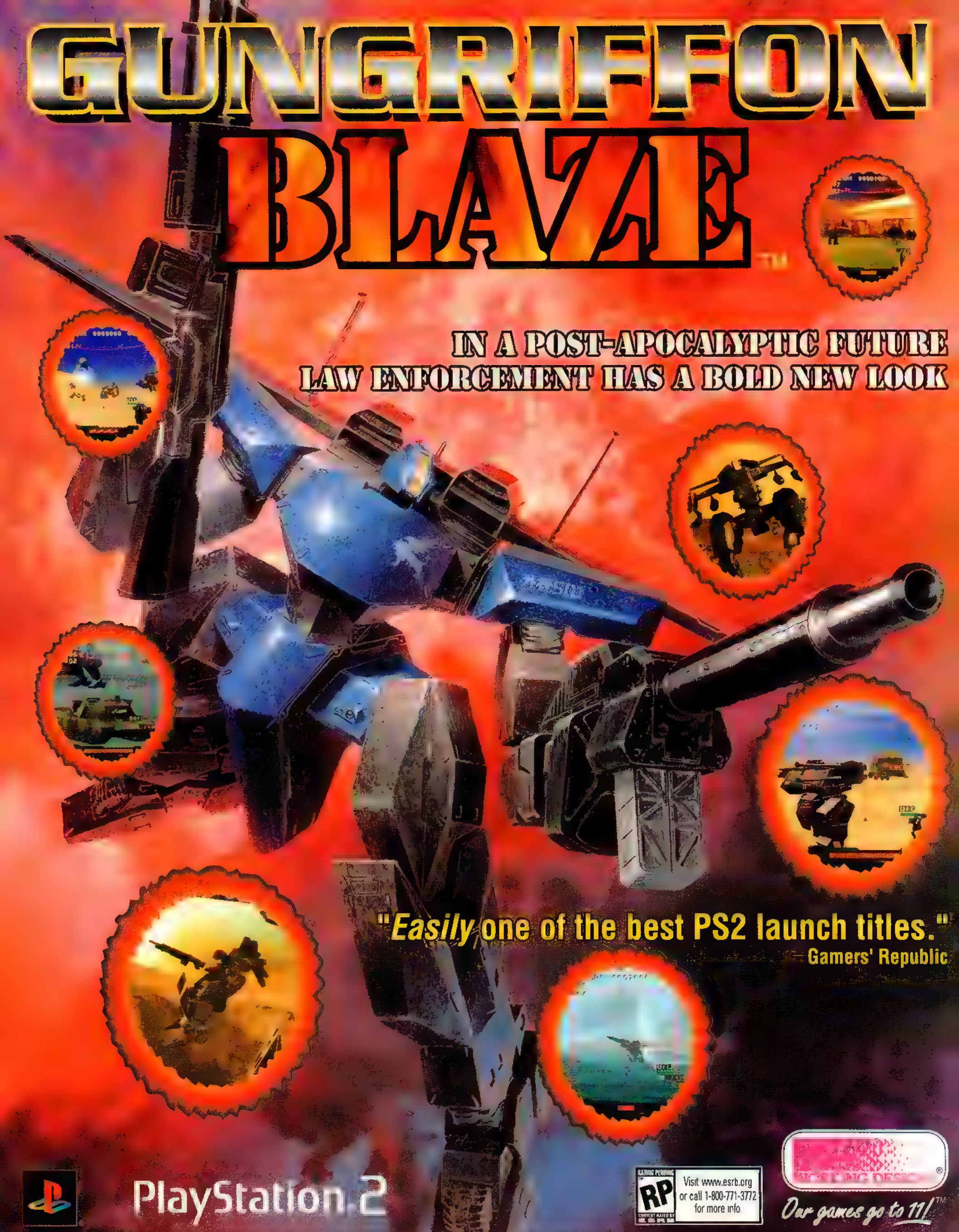
Publisher:	Agetec
Developer:	Climax Entertainment
Featured In:	*EGM* #135
Players:	1-4
Supports:	Jump Pack, Internet
Best Feature:	Plays just like DecAthlete
Worst Feature:	Only seven events
Web Site:	www.agetec.com

Being a big fan of Sega's DecAthlete on the Saturn, I was happy to hear of Agetec's last-minute decision to localize Virtua Athlete. However, when I'd finished all seven events 20 minutes later, my excitement fizzled. Compared to the amount of events in other upcoming sports titles, there's just no excuse to skimp like this. The control is the same as just about any other track & field title out there, which isn't necessarily a bad thing, but the difficulty level in Virtua Athlete is set so high that it's nigh impossible to reach the podium in most events. Playing against three friends helps a bit, but it's still frustrating that any character you choose only has a decent chance at winning in two events at most. It saps the fun right out of the game. VA does have a few redeeming qualities, the most obvious being a great player edit mode. You choose a nationality, number, name, favorite sport and dress your creation right down to the color of his socks (sorry, no women in the game). Still, DecAthlete's competitors had way more character—everyone in this game feels pretty bland and lifeless. The other cool feature is the ability to upload your records to the Internet and see how you rank. It's unfortunate that Virtua Athlete doesn't have some more substance. **As it stands, this game is only a short diversion**, and even then you'll wish there was more to the experience. Rent this one before you think about buying it. **Greg**

Sporting event video games like this are usually pretty simple when it comes to gameplay, **but this one is particularly shallow.** To begin with, it only has seven events. If each provided a lot of variety, it might be just enough, but most are so similar in control and timing that it often feels like the same thing over and over. It's a bit of a double-edged sword because if there were enough different events, I would probably dig the simple controls, but as is I just came away from each tournament wanting more variety. I can't see anyone buying this title and being happy unless they wanted a super-simple party game—rent it for that. **Kraig**

Remember DecAthlete on the Saturn? This game is just about the same, except with three fewer events. Why couldn't they have taken DecAthlete and added more events? With the Olympics fresh in everyone's mind, including **more events would've made the game last a lot longer.** Graphically, the game is somewhere between reality and the brightly colored arcade graphics of DecAthlete. I love the "tap the buttons as fast as you can to gather power" gameplay—it reminds me of the days I spent playing Track & Field II on the NES—but as it stands, this one's only a possible rental; there isn't enough here to really sink your teeth into. **Chris**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]



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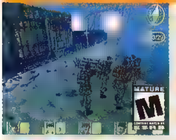
Hidden and Dangerous



Publisher: Talonsoft
Developer: Illusion Softworks
Featured In: *EGM* #128
Players: 1
Supports: Jump Pack, Keyboard
Best Feature: Easier than Rainbow Six
Worst Feature: Stupid team AI
Web Site: www.talonsoft.com

If you found Rainbow Six a little tough on the ol' brainsicle, with its wickedly complex controls and anal-retentive pre-mission planning, then Hidden and Dangerous might be what you're looking for. It's got that Tom Clancy-style team-based shootin' fun, but it's a bit more forgiving—kind of like Delta Force for the PC. That's not to say it's a cakewalk. The controls are still a chore to learn, with every possible button-trigger combo having a separate function. The fact that the game supports the keyboard is great, but it also should give you a good idea how complex the controls are here. Fortunately, it's pretty simple to arrange and equip your men as there are auto-equip functions to make life easier for novices. With 23 missions taking your snipin' ass from Norway to Italy, **H&D sticks you right in the heart of World War II**—sorta like the atmosphere of Medal of Honor (but not done as well here). The game can be pretty ugly at times, as textures aren't hi-res like their PC counterparts, and your team's AI occasionally borders on the retarded. **Milkman**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	5	7	6

Spawn

EGM SILVER

Publisher: Capcom
Developer: Capcom
Featured In: *EGM* #131
Players: 1-4
Supports: None
Best Feature: Lots of unlockable players
Worst Feature: Camera angles are problematic
Web Site: www.Capcom.com

Despite his mediocre history in the gaming realm, the new DC **Spawn is a great, fast-paced multiplayer action game.** Capcom has combined all the spazziness of Power Stone with the shooting madness of Quake in this conversion, which is pretty much arcade-perfect. That's great news as far as the graphics and gameplay are concerned, but it also means that the slowdown in multiplayer mode found its way into the home version. It's certainly tolerable, but can be annoying, especially if you're spoiled by smooth PC shooters. The larger concern is camera problems. I found myself blocked by many a crate or wall while getting pummeled by an opponent I couldn't see. With over two dozen unlockable characters on top of the 10 stock fighters (each with his/her own distinct advantages and drawbacks), there's plenty of motivation to play through the different modes more than once. The single-player game gets a little old, however, especially against the unusually talented computer opposition, so recruit some friends (or enemies) before picking this one up. **Jonathan**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Ogre Battle 64

EGM SILVER

Can you handle my sword?
...Now, let's begin!!"

Publisher: Atlus
Developer: Quest
Featured In: *EGM* #135
Players: 1
Supports: None
Best Feature: Awesome strategy RPG action
Worst Feature: May be too deep for casual gamers
Web Site: www.atlus.com

From the get-go, the most immediately striking feature of OB64 is the stunning sprite-based graphics. The backgrounds, both 3D and 2D, are lush, colorful and detailed, as are the characters. It's visually appealing as you lead young Magnus Gallant through the chain of strategic battles the series is known for. If you're familiar with the other Ogre games, you'll find the same deep combat system in place here, leading parties of up to five characters into battle. Some folks may not appreciate the tactical elements as much, especially compared to Tactics Ogre or FF Tactics, because OB64 uses the same system found in the original game—you're confined to a rectangular "arena," and square off as is. Since you can't move freely around the environment, the game feels a bit more like Suikoden than one of the better strategy RPGs, like Shining Force III. The overworld map movement is also a bit on the slow side, so if you like your games with a quicker tempo, OB64 may irritate. In any case, being that it's the only strategy-RPG on the N64, that makes it **the BEST strategy-RPG on the N64.** Seriously though, there's enough gameplay to make OB64 stand out even if there were some real competition for it on Nintendo's machine. Couple that with the high production values, along with the fact that it's one of the biggest N64 cartridges to date, and it's clear that OB64 provides a serious amount of RPG gaming. **Milkman**

The long wait is finally over! Thanks to Atlus we have a real RPG (well, Str/RPG) on the N64, and a good one. **OB64 lives up to its lofty heritage by offering up a huge campaign with an engaging story line.** In fact, I think the story in this installment is better than the previous games. Some people might not like that gameplay is limited almost entirely to troop movement, since each battle more or less plays itself out. Still, knowing that you've completed a mission solely because you deployed the right units to take care of the situation is extremely satisfying, and keeps you coming back for more. Ogre Battle 64 may be in short supply, so I'd find one while you can. **Greg**

As a huge fan of the two previous Ogre Battle games, **it's great to see Person of Lordly Caliber finally arrive, and in such excellent shape.** Ogre Battle titles, while strategy games at heart, have always been about incredibly deep story lines, something Atlus retained perfectly. Even though I personally prefer the Tactics Ogre (or FF Tactics) style of gameplay over the type found here—which is more reminiscent of the battles found in the original game—OB 64's still very enjoyable. Plus, thanks to the huge cartridge size, this game looks great. If you're a strategy/RPG fan and own a Nintendo 64, this is one game you don't want to miss. **Ryan**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	7	6

Turok 3

EGM SILVER

Oblivion
90

Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Acclaim Studios Austin
Featured In: *EGM* #134
Players: 1-4
Supports: Expansion Pak, Rumble Pak
Best Feature: Graphics in High Resolution Mode
Worst Feature: Short play length
Web Site: www.acclaim.com

I'll admit it, I'm not a huge Turok fan. Sure, I enjoyed the first game, but Turok 2 (with its huge levels and inane save feature) was an exercise in frustration, and don't even get me started on the crap that was Rage Wars. So, naturally, I started Turok 3 with a little apprehension. But after only a few minutes of play, that feeling completely disappeared. **Almost everything that irritated me about Turok 2 has been fixed:** While the overall levels are still huge, they've been divided up into dozens of smaller areas. Even better, the new save feature allows you to mark your place at any time in the game. I love the fact you can now play as two different characters with their own distinct skills and optional paths, and it's cool to see the amount of emphasis put into the story line. The part that impressed me most about Turok 3, though, was the graphic quality. This is the first N64 game I've seen truly use the Expansion Pak to its potential—the difference between low and high resolution modes is stunning. My only real problems with T3 are its length (it's only about six hours long for each character), and the fact that it's still hard to aim your weapons in high-stress areas. But despite those gripes, and even though it doesn't have quite the same depth and all the extra goodies of Perfect Dark, Turok 3 still delivers an excellent first-person shooting experience, and should be an instant purchase by any fan of the genre. **Ryan**

This is a nice surprise. After Rage Wars, I wasn't expecting big things out of Turok 3, but big things are exactly what T3 delivers—the two characters to play as, the best hi-res graphics on the N64, a smooth framerate, cool weapons, a slick story line, and an almost Half-Life-ine pace. The levels are short, and to the point (avoiding a major pitfall of T2) while a generous save system has been added as well. The **multiplayer moves at a smoother framerate than Perfect Dark**, and revamped versions of the Lost World levels from the first game are even included, a sure sign that the former Iguana loves its fans. Not as deep as PD, but almost as much fun. **Milkman**

T3 delivers most everything that got people into the Turok games in the past, but also offers some much-needed improvements. Now you can save at any time, and there are points in levels that you can restart if you die. Graphically, the game is a marvel with the RAM Pak. I couldn't play Perfect Dark in high-res because of the huge hit to the framerate, but T3 is usually fine. **If there's one complaint I have, it's the cheap hits.** All too often enemies will hit you before you can even see them. It doesn't make the game too difficult (you're given plenty of health), it does get annoying. Still, a fine conclusion to the Turok series on the N64. **Sam**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	6	8

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CUT LOOSE CRUE
SCORE: 502
COREY
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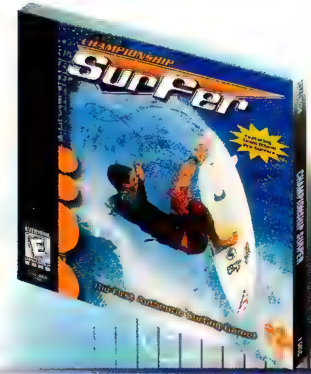
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PC screenshot

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EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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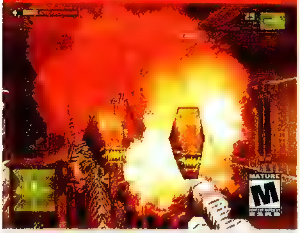
Alien Resurrection



Publisher: Fox Interactive
Developer: Argonaut
Featured In: *EGM* #132
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock, Mouse
Best Feature: Scary as hell atmosphere
Worst Feature: Frustratingly difficult
Web Site: www.foxinteractive.com

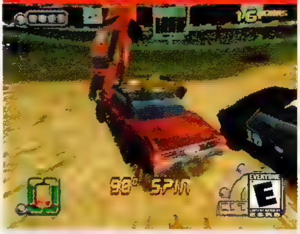
This is a game of extremes. For starters, it is easily the toughest game I have played in the two years I have been reviewing games. Maybe tough isn't the right word—it is incredibly, frustratingly, mother-blanking hard as hell. Ammo, health and save points are scarce, and the aliens are nasty; if one gets in close it's pretty much "game over, man, game over!". But that adds to another area where AR outdoes its peers—it's got to be the scariest game yet for the PS. Walking through the dark, narrow corridors and ventilation shafts, waiting for facehuggers or aliens to leap out at any moment, knowing that one mistake could mean instant death—it gets the ol' ticker going, especially if you play it in the dark. The levels are huge and pretty well-designed, with some cool tasks and puzzles built in and awesome scripted events that happen in real time as you play (although I wish there were more of them). Controls are iffy—even with the mouse/controller combo (and **don't even think about playing this game without the mouse**), strafing and changing weapons is really awkward. Graphics are pretty good for a PS game, although the fluctuating framerate (sometimes outstanding, sometimes just decent) can be disorienting. Basically, AR isn't worth it unless you have a lot of patience, a PS mouse and a love for the *Alien* movies. But if you have all three (like me), there's nothing else like it. **Mark**

As the game loads, Alien Resurrection suggests that you play it "in the dark." I highly recommend this as well—**the game's atmosphere is absolutely frightening.** In fact, it's almost as scary as the shoddy control scheme. Most of the corridors in the game are dimly lit and thus, you don't have much time to react and line up your rifle with the aliens scampering toward you. The dual analog control scheme is good, but aiming at the beasties before they get you is way too difficult, even with a mouse. AR needed some kind of autoaiming bad—there's just way too many cheap deaths, making this PS game more frustrating than the movie's hairbrained plot. **Kraig**

Now here's a case of a game that looks great, sounds great and plays...er, not so great. Be sure to play Alien Resurrection in the dark with the volume cranked. The sound effects—from the ping of your motion detector to the brap-brap-brap of your pulse rifle—are dead-on true to the flicks, while the ambient screams and hums of machinery really add to the atmosphere. This is a scary game, filled with scripted events and ideas borrowed from Half-Life. It's also a friggin' hard game. **To preserve your sanity, play on easy and play with a mouse** (unless you want to lose a fortune in busted joypads). Even then, the game's often too dang tough to be fun. **Crispin**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	9	6	5

Destruction Derby Raw



Publisher: Midway
Developer: Studio 33
Featured In: *EGM* #134
Players: 1-4
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Great vehicle control
Worst Feature: A touch of slowdown
Web Site: www.midway.com

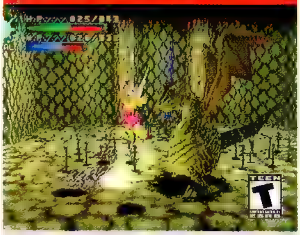
No doubt this series has fallen on tough times recently. Thankfully developer Studio 33 has stepped in to impart their racing expertise, and I'm happy to report they've done an excellent job. The three most impressive things about Destruction Derby Raw are the driving physics, the damage models and the gnarly sensation of speed. Running a close fourth are the smartly designed tracks. When I say driving physics I'm referring to the intuitive control. These pups handle like champs (a lot like the vehicles in Driver, if not more aggressive). They react to every bump and dip in the road like they should. But mostly it's their massive power-sliding abilities that won me over. Oh yeah, doing 180-degree reverse pullouts is awesome as well—all without losing any forward momentum. **It's a gearhead's dream come true.** Taking and inflicting damage is as advanced as I've seen in this genre. Each car has multiple zones of damage, and they all get really messed up as the battle rages on. It's not all random either—it takes careful hits to perform the desired effects. Spinning, flipping and barrel-rolling your opponents earn the big points. Essentially you can't win unless you master both the racing and smashing. Multiplayer is decent—beyond the regular one-on-one smash-'em-up, a game called Pass the Bomb is pretty entertaining. Aside from a hint of slowdown, DDR is firing on all eight cylinders. **Dean**

True to the DD series' roots, this game only gives you two things to worry about—racin' and smashin'. But while this new installment may not look as pretty as the past games (car damage doesn't appear as realistic as in the Reflections-developed DD titles), **Raw's control is the tightest in the series.** You get plenty of play modes, too, including four-player smash-a-thons (which are nothing special—your view is too limited; I prefer four-player bomb tag). Some tracks are too dinky, while others sprawl and get confusing, but you get so many courses—and, of course, the classic bowl-shaped arena—that you're bound to find a few you really like. **Crispin**

Once you get past the novelty of beating on other cars to gain points, there's not a whole lot to get excited about here. The collection of tracks range from inspired to downright boring, and **the control is just too arcadey for my tastes.** The cars don't even feel like they're making contact with the road, they float all over the place. It's very hard to have any real control over your car at any speed. The multiplayer aspect is pretty cool, though it usually comes down to two players squinting at a quarter of a screen trying to find one another, while the other two competitors wait for the match to be over. All in all, I can't recommend DDR as more than a rental. **Greg**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	6	6	7

Dragon Valor



Publisher: Namco
Developer: Namco
Featured In: *EGM* #134
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock
Best Feature: Good controls
Worst Feature: Boring levels
Web Site: www.namco.com

Action/RPG seems to be the one genre no one can nail on the PlayStation; Namco actually makes a pretty good attempt with Dragon Valor—good control, including duck, crawl, block, all kinds of sword attacks and special combos. There's even a ton of cool spells (fire, ice, invisibility, etc.)—the only problem is, the game doesn't take advantage of any of that stuff. **You pretty much get by using the same sword slashes and one spell** (heal). The dungeon designs and "puzzles," if you can call them that, never incorporate the finer parts of the play mechanics, like Zelda or other great action/RPGs do. Light the torch with the fire spell is about as complex as it gets, and even that's rare—it's usually just kill everything in the room and move on. The puzzles (or lack thereof) don't help the game's already low level of challenge; the bosses have really obvious patterns and most of the enemies are easily beaten by a simple overhead chop. There also isn't a lot of weapon and armor upgrading, and whoever designed the shop system needs to be put down. One very cool feature in DV is how the game follows a family through generations, branching to different playable characters depending on your actions, but it isn't enough to carry the rest of the game. Most of the framework for a good, maybe even great, action/RPG is here, but without the level design or enemies to showcase it, what does it really matter? **Mark**

As much as I wanted to walk away from Dragon Valor feeling assured that I had finally found a great action/RPG for the PlayStation, it quickly became clear this wasn't the game I had hoped for. Problems include some horribly cheesy dialogue, a formulaic and repetitive story line, dated graphics, and an item/shop system that's more pointless and frustrating than shopping at Ikea on a Saturday. I liked the variety of attacks—it took me until the end of the game before I even discovered one or two of the more obscure ones—but **unless you're really desperate for an action/RPG, DV just isn't worth it.** Vagrant Story it ain't. **Jonathan**

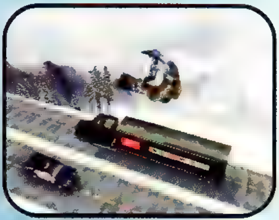
Dragon Valor is an RPG for action game fans. The idea's great, but it's too much Final Fight-like fighting and not enough RPG. I found myself leaving health potions behind because I didn't need them, only to find I couldn't get back to them when I did. And you can't pick up health to use later like you would in an RPG. **The story plays out so slowly I wished there was a button to advance the text**—instead, you can either skip entire cinemas or wait for the text to slowly make its way on screen. The dialogue is dry, emotionless and devoid of wit. The graphic style of the game suggests a comedic undertone, but there's nothing funny to be found. Weak. **Chris**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	5	5	6

I'd rather be
pissing off skiers

PURERIDE

Ride the entire mountain.



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Combine jumps, tricks and grinds
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PlayStation
PURERIDE
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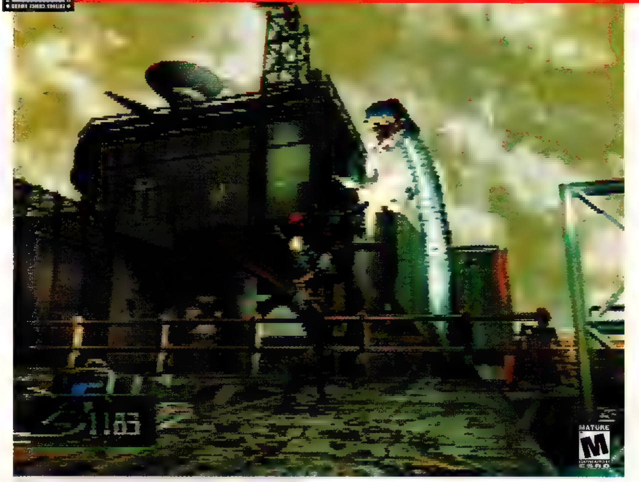
THQ

www.thq.com

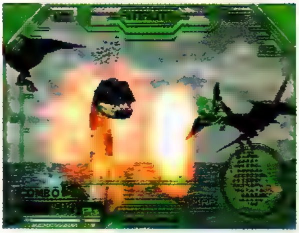
EGM SILVER

Dino Crisis 2



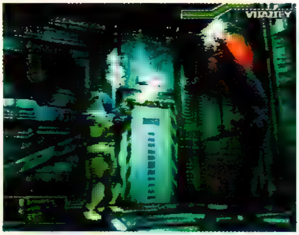
Publisher:	Capcom
Developer:	Capcom
Featured In:	*EGM* #135
Players:	1
Supports:	Dual Shock
Best Feature:	New style of gameplay
Worst Feature:	A little too "arcadey" at times
Web Site:	www.capcom.com

Ask any gamer to describe the original Dino Crisis, and chances are you'll hear something along the lines of, "It's like Resident Evil...but with dinosaurs." And they would be totally right. Because despite the fully polygonal backgrounds, more puzzle-oriented gameplay, and an entirely original setting and cast of characters, Dino Crisis looked, played, and sounded a lot like a certain popular Survival Horror series. That isn't the case with Dino Crisis 2, not even close. It's almost like Capcom was angry at all the comparisons between these two similar series, so when it came time to create the next Dino Crisis they went back to the drawing board and returned with something so alien, so different, it would almost be a crime to mention the words "Resident Evil" in the same breath as Dino Crisis 2. OK, maybe they didn't go that far, but nonetheless, Dino Crisis 2 is almost frighteningly different than the previous game. While it still holds a very similar look to Resident Evil (even moreso than the first Dino Crisis, thanks to rendered backgrounds), the gameplay is nothing like its sibling. In fact, it's almost an opposite feeling. Survival Horror games have always been about being on edge, taking things slowly and having your weapon drawn just in case. With Dino Crisis 2 you're expected to run from screen to screen, blowing away dinos as fast as possible and racking up points by achieving combos, and then you can spend these points on new weapons, ammo, upgrades and items at computer terminals. Yes, there's still the old-fashioned puzzles, the strange but cool story line twists, and boss fights, but the periods in between these elements almost feel more like a fast-paced arcade action game rather than a Survival Horror one. Is this a bad thing? Of course not, Resident Evil and Dino Crisis games should be different experiences, and it's great that Capcom realized that.



To give you a break from the heavy arcade-like action of the main adventure there's mini-games featuring...arcade-like action.

One of the coolest areas in Dino Crisis 2 is this underwater base. Not only is Regina in a keen costume, but the graphics are insane—there's this cool wavy effect and your character moves in slow motion.



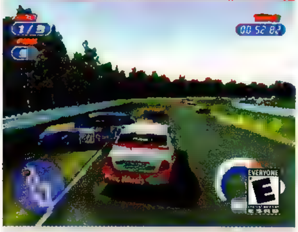
OK, I love Resident Evil games, I really do. Well, maybe not Survivor, but still. Very few releases excite me as much as Capcom's horror series, which was probably the only reason I gave the first Dino Crisis a fair chance, but I still walked away a bit disappointed. Let's face it, Dino Crisis was a Resident Evil clone, and not a very inspired one at that. Dino Crisis 2, on the other hand, is **a completely different experience.** Sure, it has Regina, there are still plenty of dinos to blow away, and the basic idea is the same as before—but it's presented in a totally different way. Even though it took me a while to get used to the action-filled gameplay—even more so because I'm so used to Resident Evil—once I got the combo system down I was racking up points and buying new weapons like a madman. The story line is cool too, certainly better than the one in the first game, and the graphics have been substantially upgraded—there's plenty of blur effects to go along with the prerendered backgrounds. There is one major problem with the new action-focused gameplay though: I hate the fact that nearly every time the camera angle changed, a dino would approach from the exact spot I was just standing in, which kind of cut down the "realism." Hardcore Resident Evil fans who are looking for a fix probably won't enjoy Dino Crisis 2 as much as the original, but those who want something a bit different shouldn't pass it up. **Ryan**

This is much more than the same old survival horror with dinosaurs. It's nonstop action, with tons more enemies, awesome control, great graphics and sweet cutscenes. Plus, I'll take a fiery red-headed Regina any day over Jill or Claire—but that's just me. I thought the polygonal backgrounds in the first game were a nice change of pace, so I expected to hate DC2's switch to prerendered BGs—but I don't: They look great, and allow outdoor settings, plus more dinos on screen at once. I also like how you can buy and upgrade your gear with points you earn by snuffing dinos, and there's less dumb item-fetching than usual for this kind of game. **Milkman**

I'm a Resident Evil-aholic, but even I have gotten a bit tired of the same old survival horror formula—that's why I love Dino 2. **The whole game has been rebuilt to revolve around the action-packed run-and-gun gameplay.** Sure that means you sacrifice some of the slow, burning fear and almost all of the superior puzzles of the first game, but I was having too much fun blowing away the big lizards to really care. Capcom took some chances that really paid off—the first-person sections are great, and the underwater part kicks some serious ass (You can jump! Finally!). Graphics and sound all are topnotch as well. Almost makes up for Survivor. Almost. **Mark**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	9	8

Jarrett & Labonte Stock Car Racing



Publisher:	Codemasters
Developer:	Codemasters
Featured In:	*EGM* #135
Players:	1-2
Supports:	Dual Shock
Best Feature:	Excellent driving physics
Worst Feature:	Totally misleading license
Web Site:	www.codemasters.com

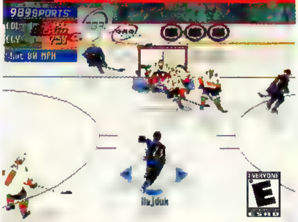
Please, look past the incredibly misleading license of this game. You won't be racing Fords, Chevys and Pontiacs around oval tracks in Jarrett & Labonte. What you will get is **one of the best touring car simulators ever to grace a home console.** Codemasters has a reputation for ultra-realistic racing sims, something that's caused them some heartache in the past since most console gamers are looking more for immediate gratification than total realism. Keeping that in mind, anyone can pick up and enjoy some success in J&LSCR. The extended setup features should draw in the vets just as quickly, though, as this is one of those racing games that'll have you trying to shave thousandths of a second off your lap time. The most impressive aspect, outside the control, is the AI of the competing drivers. If you nudge an adversary out of your way to complete a pass, pray that guy doesn't catch you. The drivers in this game remember everything you do, and they're vindictive. They'll put you into the wall in a heartbeat if they feel you've wronged them. This feature comes into play a lot since most of the cars in the game are evenly matched—you won't out-power other vehicles, you have to out-drive them. Expect lots of doorhandle to doorhandle racing on every track (all of which are modeled on real road courses). This is a race fan's dream, unless of course the title led you to believe this was a NASCAR game... **Greg**

As long as you know this isn't a traditional stock car game you won't be disappointed. It's mostly a touring car sim with some NASCAR elements mixed in for flavor. All right, it's TOCA 3. But don't worry, it's **a great racing game no matter how you slice it.** The number of cars to choose from is huge, something like 40-plus brand-name vehicles, so it's not hard to find one you like. Several real tracks as well, including Laguna and Watkins Glen ensure that NASCAR fans won't feel left out. But the star of the show is the tight gameplay—bumper to bumper all the way, it's really competitive. If I could change anything I'd make it a tad faster. Otherwise it's excellent. **Dean**

Codemasters' lengthy press release justifying the licensing of two drivers you may or may not have heard of seems to indicate that they may be as unsure as I am about why they bothered. But J&LSCR isn't about the names slapped on the box—it's all about the cars. **It's an emotional thing...and very "male."** Codemasters has pushed the PlayStation about as far as it will go in pumping out the detail, and the result is a racer that is comparable to GT2 in some areas. Handling is excellent (if a little twitchy), opponent AI is superb and there's plenty to keep you absorbed. If only the championship mode wasn't so long-winded and slow to get going. **John**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	8	9

NHL FaceOff 2001



Publisher:	989 Sports
Developer:	989 Sports
Featured In:	*EGM* #135
Players:	1-8
Supports:	Dual Shock
Best Feature:	Balanced gameplay
Worst Feature:	No franchise
Web Site:	www.989sports.com

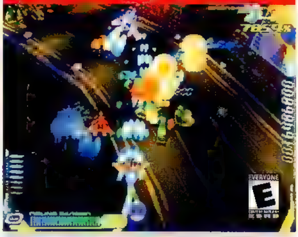
Despite being little more than a casual fan of the real-life version, I've always had a penchant for video game hockey. The sport just seems to translate well for gamers, with its subtle blend of speed, finesse and violence. NHL FaceOff 2001 captures the above ingredients with style and the result is nothing short of the best hockey game available for the PlayStation. The game engine is true to the FaceOff series, with fluid skating and a nice feeling of momentum-based physics. **Once into the game, players will notice a tight AI routine which is markedly different from previous lackluster efforts.** Scores are realistic and goalies offer just the right amount of resistance. On offense teammates cycle through the zone in various patterns, offering unique scoring opportunities at every turn. It's a nice change from games which require players to create the same crusty scoring plays over and over. Another unique first for the genre (at least on the PS) is the ability to change forward and defense lines independently, a feature which really adds to the sim value. Speaking of sim, the one "bell and whistle" which 989 left out was any sort of Franchise Mode. Still, you can play General Manager for a season, pulling the trigger on blockbuster trades and creating any new players necessary to take a team to the top. Hopefully this title doesn't get overlooked as the wave of PS2 sports stuff hits the shelves. **Dan**

It seems like this game has reached its zenith. Even with the absence of a franchise mode it still **packs enough gameplay punch to stand up to EA's NHL**. The animation looks a little funky at times but overall it's very smooth and fast. For me, that's the most important thing, but if you're looking for more it has a few new, albeit minor features. A ShootOut mode lets you practice your attack skills against the goalie alone (it's nothing special). The new expansion teams are included as well. There's also an option that lets you aim your shots more precisely—but it doesn't work that well. While not a huge advance over FaceOff 2000, it's still a solid game. **Dean**

989 puts forth a good effort with NHLFO, and includes a few nice touches that give the game added depth. The players look OK, but more importantly they move quite fluidly across the ice. Players also play fairly similar to their real-life counterparts, and **teams accurately reflect appropriate strengths and styles for each club.** One element that bothered me about this game was scoring: It's missing that eminently satisfying feeling of snapping a wrister past the goalie and seeing the net bulge behind him. Also, when I played a team with dark jerseys, I found myself passing to the ref in front of me, thinking he was my winger on a breakaway. **Joe**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	8	7	8

RayCrisis



Publisher:	Working Designs/Spaz
Developer:	Taito
Featured In:	*EGM* #136
Players:	1
Supports:	Dual Shock
Best Feature:	Old-school shooting action
Worst Feature:	No two-player mode
Web Site:	www.workingdesigns.com

Scrolling shooters are pretty hard to come by on the PlayStation, so fans of the genre tend to snap up whatever they can no matter the quality. That usually leads to a bunch of shovelware being released. However, Working Designs takes this stuff pretty seriously and it shows. RayCrisis not only has the **old-school gameplay of shooters past**—it has the bang-your-head-against-a-wall difficulty that machoistic shooter gamers out there thrive upon. On normal difficulty in special mode, RayCrisis is a good challenge for casual players, but on maximum difficulty—watch out! For the wimpier players out there it's possible to enter regular mode and play a five-mission game that's pretty easy to finish. The gameplay is intuitive if somewhat simple: You have a regular shot and a lock-on weapon that can be chained together for combo multipliers (both different on each of the three available ships), plus the kill-everything bomb. Of course, no shooter is complete without a collection of screen-filling bosses, and RayCrisis succeeds here too. The bosses are huge and take a lot of punishment before succumbing to your superior firepower. Working Designs also gets some extra credit for including the PocketStation game PocketRay (it sucks, but hey, it's a cool extra). The only big thing keeping RayCrisis down: why no two-player mode when even the last Ray game, RayStorm, included it? **Greg**

It's not often that I see an old-school shooter come across my desk, and for about an hour or so I was thrilled to play this. It has a few of the things I really like in shooters: The screen gets crazy with swarms of enemies, and there's some great end-level bosses. Everything gets a little messy at times, as any shooter does, but this one is worse because of all the pixelated graphics that are thrown up at once. **Also, RayCrisis doesn't have enough of what makes shooters really fun—tons of cool power-ups.** You can level up your weapon a bit, but there's no variety. This is a good rental, but if you want to buy a shooter, try Einhänder. **Kraig**

It's been awhile since the PlayStation had an honest, straightforward shooter, and on that level RayCrisis delivers. There's a good number of higher difficulties, and the **boss battles are intense without being impossible**—with strategy and good reflexes you can master almost all of them. Graphics are nice, smooth in most places and only slowing down when things get so intense you welcome it. The three ships also have distinct play styles that add some nice variety. Although I'd have liked to see more levels, and the gameplay doesn't have the technique or polish of an R-Type Delta or Einhänder, this should keep shooter fans happy for a bit (until Silpheed). **Mark**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	7	4	6

PlayStation 2

RELEASE DATE: PLAYSTATION 2 LAUNCH

WWW.ROCKSTARGAMES.COM/SMUGGLERSRUN

ROCKSTAR 575SWY
9
ROCKSTAR 575SWY
10
ROCKSTAR 575SWY
11
ROCKSTAR 575SWY

Angel

guidance recordings

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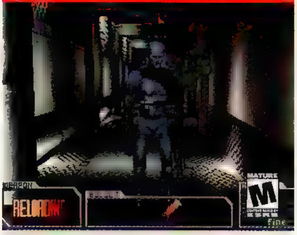
- Compete head-to-head or run "pick up and deliver" missions against AI opponents or in full multiplayer mode.
- Maneuver your way through arid desert, icy tundra, or rocky mountain forest.
- Real Time Damage Models allow you to watch the parts fly as you pay the price for punishing collisions!

SOUNDTRACK AVAILABLE ON GUIDANCE RECORDINGS

ROCKSTAR 575BWY
10
ROCKSTAR 575BWY
11
ROCKSTAR 575BWY
ROCKSTAR 575BWY

Resident Evil: Survivor



Publisher:	Capcom
Developer:	Capcom
Featured In:	*EGM* #129
Players:	1
Supports:	Dual Shock
Best Feature:	Semi-interesting story
Worst Feature:	...where should I start?
Web Site:	www.capcom.com

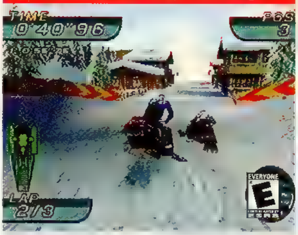
Sooner or later it had to happen—a bad Resident Evil game had to make it to market. Let's put aside the fact that the GunCon support, included in the Japanese and European versions, has been removed. Sure it was cool being able to move your guy around and shoot using the GunCon buttons, but in practice it made it a bitch to maneuver, and **Survivor has enough control problems as is**. What kind of problems? You can't strafe, can't look up or down, you turn way too slowly, and the game has a horrible habit of autoaiming and moving the screen around to where it thinks you should be looking. It makes trying to kill jumping or fast-moving enemies almost comical. You can't blow off specific parts of a target—like arms, or the head—and there's practically nothing you can shoot in the backgrounds. Monster AI is pretty pathetic; I had a spider humping my leg for about a minute without biting, and the big tyrant enemies seem to enjoy walking in circles while you slowly blast away. And the graphics? Unforgivable—blocky and pixelated, they still chug along in virtual slo-mo, sometimes with as little as one enemy on screen! It's also a fairly short game: There are a few branching paths, but each run through the game barely lasts a couple hours. The story is practically the only reason to play—that and a couple surprise moments that'll make you jump. Otherwise it's just one big mistake. **Mark**

I really enjoyed all the previous RE games, and I recognize Capcom's attempt to put a new twist on the series, but **Survivor lacks the best defining traits of an RE game**. The traditional feel is lost to a first-person perspective (with no strafe option), and while doing away with prerendered backgrounds for Code: Veronica worked on the DC, it only makes things sloppy on the PS. Unlimited handgun ammo also kills the resource management aspect, which made the previous REs more than just mindless plug-fests. The spatial audio placement is nice, but periodic techno beats disturb the game's eerie placidity. I'd like to see a sequel done right on the PS2. **Jonathan**

The worst part about Resident Evil: Survivor is it could have actually been a good game. I mean, the idea is cool: a first-person shooter taking place in the Resident Evil universe. **Sadly though, the game doesn't live up to its potential.** First of all, it looks like crap. Really. The zombies are pulled right out of Resident Evil 2 and everything gets horrifically pixelly at times. Then there's the gameplay—you can't strafe, the bullets fire out way too slow, and turning your character takes forever. The low price ($29.99) is great, but it doesn't make up for the fact Survivor looks and plays like a first-generation PS title. RE fans will likely be disappointed. **Ryan**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
4	5	5	6

Sno-Cross Championship Racing



Publisher:	Crave Entertainment
Developer:	UDS
Featured In:	*EGM* #131
Players:	1-2
Supports:	Dual Shock
Best Feature:	Realistic gameplay
Worst Feature:	Realistic gameplay
Web Site:	www.cravegames.com

The balance between keeping a racing title realistic and fun is a precarious one, and only a few games—Ridge Racer and Gran Turismo, for example—have ever truly achieved it. As you can probably guess by the rating, Sno-Cross was one of the far more numerous titles not up to the challenge. It's not that UDS didn't try with their first snowmobile racing game; they worked closely with Yamaha and utilized actual CAD drawings to create 12 super-realistic vehicles, and everything from the physics, to the sound effects, to the computer players' AI are all about as true-to-life as you can get. But, of course, that's the problem—it's almost too realistic. I don't know about you, but slipping and sliding around a course with an easily damaged snowmobile, all while trying to race against three opponents who apparently don't share my control troubles, isn't exactly my idea of fun. Sadly, the two-player mode isn't that enjoyable either—in fact I couldn't get anyone in the office to race me more than once. **Unfortunately the visuals don't help the situation**; this game can get downright ugly at times, with its close draw-in and horrible textures. There are some interesting other modes though, like a Hill Climbing mode and a well-designed track editor (which is one of this game's highlights, despite a lack of tiles to build courses with), but neither mean much when the core game isn't fun to play. **Ryan**

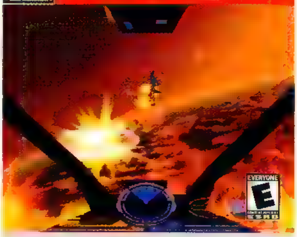
Sno-Cross is a weak starter but becomes more tolerable as you build up your sled. That's not exactly high praise but often decent racing games are brought down by their early, less exciting levels. I'm not saying it gets great but compared to the initial crappy sleds and courses, it picks up. Still, I have to say **it's no Sled Storm—not by a long shot**. Overall, the handling is loose, the courses awkward and the graphics just so-so. The difficulty level is a bit whacked as well. It's a challenge to win on any level, due in part to the slippery handling. The track editor is nice and the first-person view surprisingly good, but in the end, I didn't have much fun with this one. **Dean**

Sno-Cross is perhaps the epitome of the "average" game. Despite decent controls, the game only allows four racers to compete at a time. That makes for some **boring races since the CPU's usually kicking your ass, and the tracks are too damn long**. The lack of a competent vibration system also saps whatever tactile excitement could have been had from the game. Is it a too-realistic simulation? Not really. Riding a snowmobile is an often terrifying experience contingent on the conditions of the show you're riding on. Sno-Cross offers not only very little of the adrenaline-pumping fear, but also very little fun. **Milkman**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	6	6	5

EGM SILVER

Star Trek: Invasion



Publisher:	Activision
Developer:	Warthog
Featured In:	*EGM* #133
Players:	1-2
Supports:	Dual Shock
Best Feature:	Mission variety
Worst Feature:	Extreme difficulty
Web Site:	www.activision.com

If ever there was a game that brings Trekkies and Trek-haters together in Borg-blastin' peace and Cardassian-creamin' harmony, this is it. Star Trek: Invasion dishes heaping helpings of fan service: Michael "Worf" Dorn delivers plenty of voice-overs, and even Patrick Stewart chimes in as Picard every once in a while; you'll find famous friend and foe races, including Bajorans and the Borg; and familiar ships and ship types, such as the Enterprise, scoot through the ether. Oh, and the game introduces a new alien race. Put simply, **Invasion is a Trekkie's wet dream**—even though its *Top Gun*-in-zero-G theme is an alien concept in Gene Roddenberry's universe, where usually only big ships brawl. But it's the mission variety here that'll suck in all types of space-combat fans. During the 30 missions, you'll fly a cloaked ship past enemy scans to nuke an entire planet (Prime Directive? Whazzat?). You'll man a starship turret and fend off buzzing attackers. You'll infiltrate a Borg cube and blast its guts. Two-player cooperative missions pop up once in a while, too (they're way more fun than the regular two-player versus mode). Invasion ain't without its faults. Crafted by some of the members of the Colony Wars team, the game is often as difficult as those Psygnosis shooters. Fortunately, you can save after every mission. Just prepare for plenty of frustration before you boldly go...well, you know. **Crispin**

Invasion is a fresh take on the Trek universe, even if it does stretch things a bit to make the dogfighting concept fit. **Die-hard PS fans can think of it as Colony Wars meets Starfleet.** The atmosphere of the game is excellent—the graphics are eye-popping and the thematic music does justice to the series. The opening scene of the Enterprise-E cruising by an asteroid field really foreshadows some of the fantastic visuals to come. The only problems lie with the controls. They are a tad touchy, and the weapon selection is cumbersome, particularly during combat. Eventually you'll get used to it but until you do, you'll feel like a red shirt ensign. **Kraig**

Take Colony Wars, hell—take the Colony Wars team, and insert Star Trek references wherever possible. It may sound odd, but it works. Once you get over the culture shock of the Trek universe being filled with small fighter ships, which just seems inherently wrong, it's remarkably absorbing. The story is involving and sucks in all the Trek faves; you go up against Romulans early on in the game and then have a crack at both the Cardassians and the Borg before encountering the games "all-new" race of psycho aliens. It's compelling stuff, and it looks beautiful. **Trekkies will love it, and space combat buffs will revel in the excruciatingly tough gameplay.** **John**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	8	7	7

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Team Buddies

Publisher:	Midway
Developer:	Psygnosis
Featured In:	*EGM* #127
Players:	1-4
Supports:	Multi-tap
Best Feature:	RTS action on PS
Worst Feature:	Sometimes confusing interface
Web Site:	www.midway.com

Originally part of Psygnosis' lineup before they closed up shop, Midway has decided to release this funky puzzle/party game. Team Buddies is a brightly colored slab of high-energy weapon and buddy building that lets you square off against three other friends (provided you have the Multi-tap of course). Your job is to grab as many little blocks as you can from the "pile o' blocks," return them to your building pad and cash them in for a variety of weapons. You'll wield rocket-launchers, extra buddies, machine guns, grenades, etc. It's nicely balanced for either solo play or party time—there's a cute story mode to play through if you have no friends, and there's many, many multiplayer games if you do. The game can be confusing at times as it's occasionally difficult to place the blocks in the right spots; trying to figure out what exactly you're building can also be a challenge. As you progress through the game, you unlock more and more secrets to use in multiplayer. The odd camera perspectives can be tough, but once you've adjusted to it, the game becomes a graphically appealing romp that boasts one of the best game soundtracks you've ever heard. Ranking right up there with Wipeout XL, Street Fighter III: Third Strike and Ridge Racer Type 4, the music and sounds are one of the best parts about Team Buddies. This one isn't essential, but it's **one of the best multiplayer games since Poy Poy.** **Milkman**

Am I supposed to feel bad I'm blowing away cute little jellybeans? I mean, they have guns and are blasting away at me—it's cool to kill them, right? This is such a weird little game. But, at the same time, it's also very cool. **The gameplay is fun, I love the mission structure, and the graphics are quite keen.** Think of Team Buddies as a simple version of Command and Conquer laced with a very wacky story line, except you can only control a couple soldiers. Who look like candy. My only real problem with Team Buddies is it gets a little too silly at times; it's easy to see this game was made for strategy gamers of all ages, which kind of alienates hardcore fans. **Ryan**

I must give Team Buddies credit—it's a fresh idea, and once you get used to the puzzle elements (stacking boxes in order to create power-ups), it becomes a lot of fun. The game is pretty humorous too—I thought it was incredibly funny when I repeatedly ran over to the Milkman's base to steal and break his boxes. (He didn't find it so amusing). I think Psygnosis did **a fine job of mixing the action and puzzle elements**, but there were times when I just felt that I'd rather have one or the other done better (usually when I was getting blasted in the back by the Milkman). Worth checking out if you're into Bomberman-style action. **Sam**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	8	8	8

Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2

Publisher:	Activision
Developer:	Neversoft
Featured In:	*EGM* #130
Players:	1-2
Supports:	Dual Shock
Best Feature:	The new manual move
Worst Feature:	Long character-select load times
Web Site:	www.neversoft.com

Attention all developers working on THPS clones—come out with your hands up. Neversoft has built the ultimate skate game with this sequel. It packs more pro skaters, more tunes, more level objectives, more moves and more real environments. But let's not gloss over the details. Rapid-tap the X button after you bail, for instance, and you'll hop back on your board more quickly. Switching to a goofy stance actually affects your performance. It's easier to wall ride. Landing sloppy or busting out of tricks early screws your score. And **now you can perform manuals, which singlehandedly make THPS2 an entirely new game** when it comes to combos. Perfect your manual technique and you can theoretically combo an infinite number of tricks (well, as long as you don't lose momentum). Manuals make for astronomical trick totals—not to mention a much more interesting game of two-player H.O.R.S.E. Unfortunately, Neversoft didn't have time to implement a multiplayer tournament mode. But you'll find no shortage of hidden areas and secrets (scrutinize the Title Screen for a big hint). And then there's the intuitive course editor, which gives you all the tools you need to build any track you can imagine. (DexDrive users, listen up—custom courses only take up one block.) Combine the track editor with the ultra-deep create-a-skater option and THPS2 gives you all the tools you need to build your own Tony Hawk clone. **Crispin**

Take Tony Hawk, put in bigger levels, a park editor, a skater editor, more tricks and an even better soundtrack. **A winner? Hell yes!** There are some really sick combos possible in THPS2, thanks to the new manual system. Some of the guys around here can string together tricks like nobody's business. It takes a little practice (much like balancing grinds did the first time you picked up the original game), but like everything else in this series it feels entirely natural after a short time. THPS2 suffers a bit from the limited power of the PlayStation, but what game on this system doesn't? Go buy this game now...unless you wanna wait for the DC version like me. **Greg**

Many times sequels are botched by overly ambitious developers. That's not the case here. **All the stuff they've added is really useful**, namely: create-a-skater, the manual trick and the track editor. Thankfully they didn't mess with the game engine. The level editor is the best idea of all. Everything is displayed in 3D so basically it's just a matter of placing each chunk in the desired location. Throw in some rails, benches, ramps, whatever and you have your own park. The manual trick is my next favorite. It lets you link tricks by balancing on two wheels between maneuvers. They've done a great job of fortifying an already stellar game. **Dean**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	9	8	10

Hogs of War

Publisher:	Infogrames
Developer	Infogrames U.K.
Featured In:	*EGM* #131
Players:	1-2
Supports:	Dual Shock
Web Site:	www.acclaim.com

Best Feature: It's like Worms in 3D

Worst Feature: Difficult to aim weapons in 3D

If you have never played Worms, then you might not fully appreciate Hogs of War, the first game to put the addictive turn-based combat style of Worms into three dimensions. Originality is very important to me, so I was a little wary of giving such **a blatant knock-off of Worms** a high score. But the transition to 3D is executed very well, and Hogs of War is fun to play solo or against friends. The missions start out slow, all of your troops are basic grunts, and you only have a few tools available for combat. As you progress, however, you can upgrade your corps of pigs to either heavy weapons, engineer, medic or espionage types and fully develop the unit to your liking. The pig theme adds some character and surprisingly doesn't get tired, but the voicework and the attack phrases can grate the nerves (fortunately, you can turn voices off). The few problems I had with Hogs were trying to aim widespread projectile weapons like the bazooka, as well as trying to navigate my soldiers over hilly terrain. Unspectacular, yet surprisingly solid. **Andrew**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	6	6	7

Incredible Crisis

Publisher:	Titus
Developer:	Polygon Magic
Featured In:	*EGM* #134
Players:	1
Supports:	None
Web Site:	www.titus.com

Best Feature: It's so crazy!

Worst Feature: Too strange for U.S. audiences?

Whoever green-lighted bringing this game to the States has got to have balls the size of Philadelphia. Strongly Japanese in feel and design, some may dismiss Incredible Crisis as a niche title, but they'd be missing an oddly entertaining little game. Essentially a large collection of simple but fun mini-games (24 to be precise), IC is a one-player party game that is equal parts inspired and bizarre. What other game has you give a sexy woman in a red dress a backrub on a ferris wheel? Or steer your ambulance stretcher through the oncoming traffic of crowded city streets? Or trying to stop an elevator in mid-plummet as objects fall on your head? This game has a great sense of humor, and parodies everything from movies to other video games. Plus every mini-game you beat becomes unlocked in your "library," so you can play your favorites again easily and show your friends the funny ones. The graphics are simple, but attractive enough, and the sounds are amusing. If you're in the mood for something different and a little "out there," give this one a shot. **Milkman**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	5	8	7

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MONSTERMAN™ 2000. Michael Manley @ ActionPlanet.com

Jeremy McGrath Supercross 2000

Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Acclaim
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1-2
Supports: Dual Shock
Web Site: www.acclaim.com

Best Feature: Many tracks
Worst Feature: Tracks pretty much the same—all dirt

Having limited knowledge of the sport of motocross, I dove into Jeremy McGrath Supercross 2000 assuming it would be a somewhat respectable simulation. After five minutes of play, I decided that if this is what the real thing is supposed to be like, I hope I never sit on a dirt bike. Supercross 2000 suffers from the two most significant flaws a racing game can have: **poor framerate and sloppy controls**. If the framerate of this game renders it nearly unplayable, then the loose controls render it completely unplayable. Now we know the reason why the Series mode is limited to only two players, the engine can hardly handle seven computer opponents. One other thing that doesn't make much sense, the two-player splitscreen is horizontal and cannot be changed in the options menu. Already annoying in other genres, it's especially frustrating in a racing game where peripheral vision is important. Struggling to control your racer and eye fatigue are two reasons to avoid McGrath at all costs, and I don't think you need any others.

Andrew

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
4	3	5	4

NASCAR 2001

Publisher: EA Sports
Developer: EA Sports
Featured In: *EGM* #131
Players: 1-2
Supports: Dual Shock
Web Site: www.easports.com

Best Feature: Licensed drivers and tracks including Daytona
Worst Feature: Car control

Every year we expect NASCAR to be better than the last, and for the most part it hasn't disappointed. Unfortunately this edition doesn't follow tradition, and suffers from enough problems to say that it's a step backward. A couple nasty flaws really stand out. The first I can only describe as excessive camera shake. The effect is meant to re-create the violent jostling that real drivers experience on the raceway. That's great—it's a good idea in theory anyway—but they've got it dialed up to a crazy level. The screen jumps around to the point of absurdity. My second gripe involves the way the cars handle or, more aptly, don't handle. They sway from side to side like the waves on the ocean. **Every deviation in direction has them rocking back and forth like an old Chevy with loose springs**. It's possible to clamp things down somewhat, but the problem still persists. I guess new physics models weren't all that necessary. On a positive note, Daytona is in the game. Still, in light of the problems I'd cool my heels until the PS2 version comes out this fall.

Dean

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	6	5	6

Pro Pinball Fantastic Journey

Publisher: Empire
Developer: Cunning
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1-4
Supports: Dual Shock
Web Site: www.empire.co.uk

Best Feature: Authentic pinball feel
Worst Feature: Hard to see everything

Pinball machines are cool because they are real, charmingly mechanical machines that can still entertain us in this era of virtual everything. Empire adds a new table to their lineup of solid pinball sims with PPFJ. Like their other titles, Empire gets the ball physics just right as PP has a wonderfully authentic feel to it. At the same time, **the board is still a little tough to see from every angle**, and some of the intricate details get lost in the aging graphic capabilities of PS. It is ironic that games which celebrate a nostalgic slice of interactive entertainment's heritage will benefit from advances in technology as next-generation consoles will be better suited to re-creating the vivid colors, sharp details and three-dimensional boards that make such games timeless. Meanwhile, the board on PPFJ has a time travel theme and has a nice mixture of ramps, spinners and other contraptions. My biggest complaint is the same one I've had with previous installments of video pinball: The entire board is hard to see from any angle and from any view setting.

Joe

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	4	3	5

Tyco RC

Publisher: Mattel
Developer: Lucky Chicken
Players: 1-2
Supports: Dual Shock
Web Site: www.mattelinteractive.com

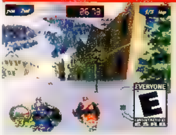
Best Feature: It's got the actual Tyco RC vehicles
Worst Feature: Bumping into walls hurts bad

As with Acclaim's RC Revenge (also reviewed in this issue), Tyco RC: Assault With a Battery is a game that comes as a result of the recent popularity of the kart racing genre...and offers absolutely nothing new. And unfortunately, Tyco RC isn't nearly as enjoyable as RC Revenge (which I happen to really like). The only reason you'd want to pick up this game is to play with the Tyco RC cars, which are all found here. But even fans of the cars will soon become frustrated with this game, since despite the accurate car models, it certainly doesn't offer accurate physics. In real life, when you race these Tyco RC cars, they bounce, flip and jump around whenever you hit obstacles. However, in the game, **there will be times when you'll just nudge a wall and it'll bring you almost to a complete stop.** That, I find, is pretty ridiculous and definitely very annoying. Graphics in the game range from decent to actually pretty good, but the music and sounds are just blah. If you're looking for an RC-style racer, RC Revenge both looks and plays better than this effort.

Sam

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	5	1	5

Polaris SnoCross



Publisher: Vatical
Developer: Vicarius
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1-4
Supports: Dual Shock
Web Site: www.vatical.com

Best Feature: The price
Worst Feature: The monotony

This game reminds me of the original and outstanding Road Rash for the Sega Genesis except you're on snow, the screen wobbles a lot more, and, uh, this is a PS game. **The mediocre production values in this title are apparent from startup**. Drivers and sleds look like they're put together with jumbo-sized pixels, and the snow couldn't even pass for really bad fake snow. The courses are fairly bland and the computer AI wimpy: without even looking at the instructions, I was able to win the first race I entered. Following a recent trend of niche-based, budget-priced, shallow-premise games that remind me of late '80s arcade classics, PSC is a fairly one-dimensional experience. While PSC did not exactly keep me riveted to the screen, the game is not unplayable and with the lower price point, it may even appeal to a very specific type of gamer. If you're a hardcore snowmobile enthusiast, or you're looking for a new, cheap racing game to play at your next social gathering then PSC may be for you. For everyone else, I'd recommend taking a pass on this one.

Joe

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
3	4	3	2

RC Revenge

Publisher: Acclaim
Developer Acclaim
Featured In: *EGM* #135
Players: 1-2
Supports: Dual Shock
Web Site: www.acclaim.com

Best Feature: A track editor
Worst Feature: A track editor with limited memory = worthless

The world needs more kart racers. No, seriously. The market should be so flooded with mediocre kart racers that everyone will get sick of them and the genre will die (or at least go away for a while). RC Revenge from Acclaim is a good first step in the kart racer rejuvenation plan, as it offers **absolutely nothing new or innovative and at the same time manages to screw up the accepted conventions of the genre**. The first time through most of the tracks will appear to be creative and fun, but by lap two they quickly turn obnoxious and cluttered. Let's run through the list of power-ups: a shield, a projectile missile, temporary speed boost...you get the picture. Being constantly battered around by your opponents doesn't help, and makes RC Revenge more akin to bumper cars than actual car racing. Thankfully, Acclaim fixed the framerate problem that plagued the awful port of Re-Volt, so the game is at least somewhat playable. But with Crash Team Racing and Mario Kart as available options, who would want to try one of the other 10,000 alternatives instead.

Andrew

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	5	1	5

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Spin Jam

Publisher: Take 2
Developer: Empire Interactive
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1-2
Supports: None
Web Site: www.take2games.com
Best Feature: Addicting arcade-like gameplay
Worst Feature: The cuteness of the characters

Let's face it, Take 2 Interactive's series of $10 games has been...well, disappointing to say the least. No, scratch that, releases like Spec Ops and Grudge Warriors have been little more than pricey drink coasters. Thankfully that's not the case with Spin Jam. Not only is this game worth the measly amount of money it retails for, **it's one of the few puzzle titles I'd recommend grabbing even if it carried a full-price sticker**—it's that good. The basic idea is similar to Bust-A-Move, but the overall objective is much more involved. Like BAM, you have to link up three bubbles of the same color to make them pop, but in Spin Jam the explosion causes the other bubbles on the far side of the central ball to fire outward. Before they launch you have to turn the playfield to line them up so they hit the larger colored bubbles on the outside, eventually making them burst. You've got to see it in action to understand, but suffice to say, like any good puzzle game, it gets addictively complex the further you go—and the two-player mode is a blast. Give it a try.

Ryan

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
6	8	8	9

Sydney 2000

Publisher: Eidos
Developer: Attention to Detail
Featured In: *EGM* #131
Players: 1-2
Supports: None
Web Site: www.eidos.com
Best Feature: Lots of events
Worst Feature: Crappy and sluggish graphics

Like the DC version, Sydney 2000 on the PlayStation has a robust variety of events, but it suffers from a lot of the same problems—only they're worse. First and foremost, the player models are laughable, and that's a big blemish since the Olympics focus on individuals. **There's no way in hell most of these people could be Olympians—they'd look more at home at a Weight Watchers clinic.** Not only do they look funny, but they animate very poorly as well. For champions of speed and finesse, these athletes move pretty damn clunkily. Some events are worse than others—kayaking is so choppy your boat skips across the water like a rock, and the Hurdles competition takes place from a bad camera view to complement its ugly graphics. What it all comes down to is that although Sydney 2000 has its moments, it has too many problems for it to really be fun. While the Dreamcast version is just passable, this one slightly fails. Hopefully something more deserving of the five rings comes out soon, while anyone still gives a damn about the Olympics.

Kraig

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
4	4	5	5

Dynasty Warriors 2

PS2

Publisher: Koei
Developer: Koei/Omega Force
Featured In: *EGM* #135
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock 2
Best Feature: Consistent action
Worst Feature: Repetitive gameplay
Web Site: www.koeigames.com

If nothing else, Dynasty Warriors 2 is a unique gaming experience presented within a stunning graphical shell. Its best and worst attributes can all be traced to the game's most prominent quality—its reluctance to fit into any one particular genre. On one hand, DW2 defies strategy game convention by putting full control of only one character into the player's hands. As a result, the game is dripping with action. When you're not slicing at enemies with one of several available weapons, you're riding a horse across the map to support units in trouble and boost your troop's morale. Watching two or three dozen warriors clash at once while the PS2 effortlessly keeps pace is impressive. On the other hand, rolling action, fighting and strategy elements into one package means making sacrifices in each area, so more particular gamers may long for greater depth. The strategy element is really limited to either attacking or not attacking a mass of enemies, and there is little need for planning before battle. As far as the action element is concerned, the attack moves look nice but there are very few of them, which means the same monotonous button-pressing over and over most of the time. And since single battles can last over an hour, all this repetition definitely hurts the overall experience. Nevertheless, **DW2 is fundamentally intriguing and a decent execution of a very original concept.**

Jonathan

Imagine what any of Koei's strategy titles would be like as an action game and this is what you get. There are a few flaws once you get past the initial "wow" factor of the graphics (which are amazing). It feels like a first-generation game—like a PS1 game with upgraded graphics. Control is tight, but the camera is too often not where you want to be looking. The biggest problem, though, is that the combat in the hour-plus battles gets monotonous. **Hack, slash, look at the map, repeat.** Each character has his/her own style, but you're stuck with his/her moves and weapon all the way through. The combat's too simple for a game that professes to have more strategic elements.

Chris

With a good deal of action and pretty decent artwork, DW2 seems really appealing at first. I found the action to be reminiscent of the old Ninja Turtles arcade game–once you figure out which of the two or three moves to use when, you lose interest after a couple of levels. Although there are several different characters to play the game with, they're not going to make you want to start an hour-long battle over again. The sound, story and gameplay are pretty average, so there's not much to bump it up the chart. While fun for about the first half hour, DW2 gets **too repetitive to really enjoy long-term, so you'll probably want to rent this one first.**

Dean

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	5	8	5

Eternal Ring

PS2

Publisher: Agetec
Developer: From Software
Featured In: *EGM* #125
Players: 1
Supports: Dual Shock 2
Best Feature: Making magic rings
Worst Feature: Simplistic combat
Web Site: www.agetec.com

Eternal Ring is so similar in most ways to From Software's earlier King's Field games that it makes you wonder if it was shot out solely to take advantage of the PS2 launch. There's a disturbing lack of control—no analog stick support, no jump, no dodge, no shield or block move. You basically run up to an enemy, strike with your one same attack—repeat until one of you is dead. And the bad guys are pretty dumb too; most of them would be a snap to kill if not for a bug that allows their projectile attacks to fly through walls. But combat, as well as the overall game, is elevated a bit by the rings you can find and create. Gems left by defeated enemies can be forged into magic rings with all sort of different powers, depending on the elements of the gems used to create them. There are 100 different rings in all, and experimenting with gem combinations and fiddling with all the different magics is really the one part of the game that works well. Graphics are crisp and smooth, but then again this is the PS2 and there's nothing that complicated going on—buildings and outdoor segments are simplistic and textures repeat often. The game tries to inject some life through real-time story cutscenes and voicework, and it does become interesting later but never totally engrossing. Basically ER comes down to this: **a decent launch title for new PS2 owners desperate for an adventure, but ultimately flawed and disappointing.**

Mark

It's King's Field all over again. I guess the thinking behind releasing Eternal Ring is pretty sound from a financial point of view, but **this game has that "we need to rush out an RPG for launch, who cares if it's any good" feel to it.** The real-time sword fighting quickly becomes a repetitive affair: step forward, jab, step back, repeat. Even after gaining the use of magic, combat is an incredibly boring experience, with control so dicey that dying unexpectedly is an all-too-common occurrence. Eternal Ring doesn't even have the luxury of an interesting story to gloss over the bad gameplay. From Software still doesn't know how to make a good RPG.

Greg

Eternal Ring **won't sell you on the PS2 hardware, but it's worth checking out for FPS and Action-RPG fans.** The ring system, which lets you develop strengths and tweak spells, is very cool. I would liked to have seen more brainwork in the game, though—a healthy set of Zelda-esque puzzles could have worked wonders. I also found myself hoping for fancier special effects; most of the levels and monsters look good but a lot of the spells are disappointing. Unfortunately combat could also use a little sprucing up—you end up employing the same simple tactics in almost every situation. Not a blockbuster but worth a try.

Jonathan

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	6	3	3

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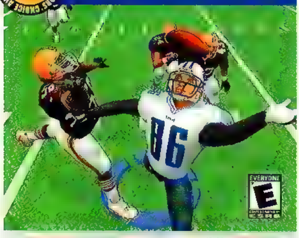
EGM GOLD · EDITORS' CHOICE AWARD

Madden NFL 2001



PS2

Publisher: EA Sports
Developer: Tiburon
Featured In: *EGM* #135
Players: 1-4
Supports: Dual Shock 2
Best Feature: Oh, those wonderful graphics
Worst Feature: More sluggish than PS1 version
Web Site: www.easports.com

There's no doubt in my mind that this is the best-looking PS2 game out of the gate. **When I first booted it up, I thought I'd died and gone to football heaven**, and for good reason. The attention to detail is incredible. There's the things you'll see during gameplay, such as the receivers reaching out to catch the ball, or the way players' body parts react when hit. Then there's the coaches on the sideline, or the chain-gang moving the First Down marker before the players barrel into it. But the most amazing things are the moments you might need an Instant Replay to catch: a QB grimacing at a receiver who drops the ball, the grass stuck in helmets, or players following the ball into their hands with their eyes—you can even see them spread their fingers to accept it. Of course graphics aren't the only draw. Just like its PS1 counterparts, PS2 Madden is a very realistic brand of football that's made even moreso by the animations. For example, you can't just hit a receiver in the back for him to make a catch anymore, now you have to put it somewhere his hands can reach. The news isn't all good, however: whereas Madden PS1's gameplay might be a little too fast, this one is a little too slow. Players don't seem to move quick enough, even if you pound on the speed burst. It's not too bad, but Madden fans shouldn't expect this one to play as quick as you're used to. A small price to pay for such amazing progress. **Kraig**

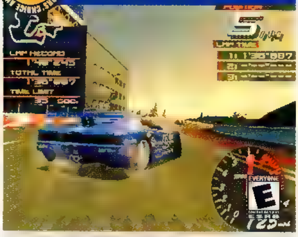
It's a brand-new ball game. Pardon the cliché but it applies. The plays, sound effects and controls may be familiar but **the soul of the game is completely new.** The overwhelming theme? It's more a sim than ever before. It truly requires a knowledge of football strategy to be successful. In the PS version you can get away with a lot of slop: that won't happen here. A smooth framerate, killer animation and decent AI keep things very honest. I miss the exaggerated collisions, but that would look out of place with the realistic nature of this title. One complaint: It's mighty tough to break through the offense line. Otherwise, I've found my new obsession. **Dean**

Undoubtedly one of the highest profile launch games for PS2, EA has done almost everything right with Madden. Jaw-dropping graphics and attention to **subtleties never seen before in a football game** close the gap between this simulation and the real thing more than ever before. The eye movements and facial expressions are astonishing, and the huge variety of catching and tackling animations make this game come alive. Fortunately, EA included just about all the controls and plays you're used to from previous Madden games. About the only minor gripe I have with M2001 PS2 is that gameplay has a slightly sluggish feel to it. **Joe**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
10	7	9	9

EGM GOLD · EDITORS' CHOICE AWARD

Ridge Racer V



PS2

Publisher: Namco
Developer: Namco
Featured In: *EGM* #131
Players: 1-2
Supports: Dual Shock 2
Best Feature: Excellent control
Worst Feature: All that fog in multiplayer
Web Site: www.namco.com

I love this game. Even with all the great American-developed launch titles on the way, RRV is the reason I'll be buying a PlayStation 2 this month. It embodies almost everything I look for in an arcade-style racer: **awesome graphics, smooth framerate, intense speed** and a collection of cars that caters to every driving style imaginable. Once you've discovered which machine works best with your style, there's nothing you can't do on the track. The cars handle so well it's almost scary. The debate as to which of the first four Ridge Racer games had the best control can be put to rest, since fans of every one of them will find a car they like in RRV. Much like earlier games in the series, all seven of RRV's tracks are connected, usually featuring some of the same turns every time. That said, each track offers a unique challenge, so lack of variety isn't a problem. The only place where some more variety would be nice is in the car designs. Once you've seen the main group of vehicles, they just keep reappearing with different body modifications (the hidden cars are a little more interesting, but you can't use them in the official races anyway). A collection of vehicles more akin to the ones found in Rage Racer would have been best here. But the big reason why Ridge V isn't receiving a 10 from yours truly: The two-player split-screen mode is ugly to the point of being offensive—inexcusable on a system this powerful. **Greg**

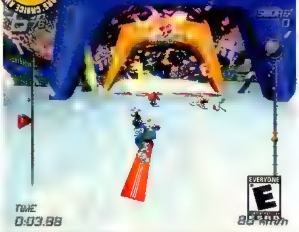
No surprises here; Ridge V is as good as we anticipated. Having played the Japanese version for some time we knew what to expect. **If you're a fan of the classic Ridge Racer panache you won't be disappointed.** The game manages to retain its famous drift-style gameplay while incorporating new flash. It's amazing that it can look so good yet still keep a respectable framerate. I still think it's odd however, that the cars made for grip actually slide better than the drift vehicles. The drift cars tend to slow quite a bit when you whip 'em around the corners, whereas the grip cars slide *and* keep speed. Not much of a complaint really. RRV is a very solid game. **Dean**

In part because I expect great racing games from Namco, and in part because of similarities to earlier Ridge games, I liked RRV but it never blew me away. The graphics are nice—there are a couple bad textures you may notice, and some serious fog in the two-player mode you can't miss—but mostly it's blazingly fast, crisp and detailed. Controls feel great (although I prefer the Grip-type cars now for the first time) with good use of the analog buttons; I adjusted and was back in form after only a few races. But winning don't come easy. Computer cars are fast and love to box you out (a relief after R4's wimpy AI). All said, I found RRV **polished, but predictable. Mark**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	9	6	9

EGM GOLD · EDITORS' CHOICE AWARD

SSX



PS2

Publisher: EA Sports
Developer: EA Canada
Featured In: *EGM* #135
Players: 1-2
Supports: Dual Shock 2
Best Feature: Great overall presentation
Worst Feature: Little bit of slowdown
Web Site: www.easports.com

SSX is a pure adrenaline rush. **It bombards the senses with incredible speed, fantastic graphics and excellent sound.** Rather than go the licensed music route, EA actually had a real artist (Mix Master Mike) come up with original songs to fit the game. The result is astounding, and the combination of the tunes and voices (each announcer and rider speaks in their native language and/or accent) is unparalleled. You'll even hear the WCW's Mean Gene announcing a race! All eight boarders have unique trick repertoires containing 50 different maneuvers (including my favorite, the Canadian Bacon Air) which you unlock as you build up their stats by competing in different races. There are several boards to unlock for each character as well, and using different types results in a different trick set for your rider. This all adds up to a surprising amount of depth for a game that could have been just another snowboarding title. While the control takes a little getting used to (most people automatically want to play it like Tony Hawk), it's easy to appreciate the subtleties after only a couple of races. I can't say enough good things about SSX, but there is one downside: slowdown. It's very infrequent and doesn't really bother me in the heat of competition, but it's there. I guess the new-system blues hit the guys and gals at EA...bummer. Oh, and the Canadian girl is totally hot. I'm all for that in any video game. Buy this. **Greg**

Snowboarding games haven't held my interest since Steep Slope Sliders on the Saturn (I was never a big Cool Boarders fan), but SSX succeeded in bringing me back for more, even when I was doing poorly (some advice: Don't start the game playing with Mac). Courses are long and varied enough that it doesn't feel like you're whizzing past the same scenery over and over. The sense of speed is intense (helped along by the excellent soundtrack), and aside from an occasional drop in framerate, the game runs "sweeter than candy," as Elise would say. This is one **PS2 game that plays as good as it looks**—a rarity in what I've played of the launch lineup. **Chris**

SSX is about the most creative snowboarding game I've played. The flashy environments, shortcuts and insanely long tracks keep the adrenaline flowing. But most importantly, it really looks and feels like you're snowboarding. Like how the snow trails behind your board change shape depending on your angle. Sure it may seem like no big deal, but the game is packed with small touches like that. I also like the freedom of the tracks—each has multiple routes, including many rewarding (and challenging) shortcuts. So essentially it's golden, except for one thing. **All the graphical bells and whistles drag the speed slightly.** Even so, SSX is a must-buy launch game. **Dean**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
9	9	9	9

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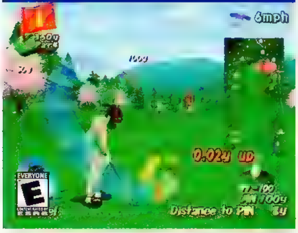
Swing Away Golf



Publisher: Electronic Arts
Developer: T&E Soft
Featured In: *EGM* #135
Players: 1-4
Supports: Dual Shock 2, Multi-tap 2
Best Feature: Story mode
Worst Feature: Goofy caddies
Web Site: www.ea.com

Quite a bit of time passed between the original PlayStation launch (September '95) and the release of the first fun golf game (Hot Shots Golf, April '98). That won't be the case for PlayStation 2 owners, however, as Swing Away Golf **mimics the Hot Shots formula with some success**. Whimsical characters and a cartoonish look give the game a light feel, but underneath lies a deep game of golf. There are a number of shots to master and success depends on coming to grips with some of the intricacies of the sport. For instance, did you know that moving your front foot toward the ball will help induce a draw? Swing Away knows it, and allows you to adjust such minute details. If you're intimidated, don't be, as the game brings you along the learning curve with a well-designed tutorial. The course generator is a cool idea which falls short of its potential. You suggest parameters for a hole, such as par 3, dogleg, lots of water, and the game randomly generates it. Kind of a hands-off approach, if you will. The real fun in the game rests in the Story mode, where you work through imaginary calendar years to progress from Amateur to Pro. Along the way, you'll meet the various characters in the game, earn points for winning, and buy fancy new equipment. The game's only real drawback is the pace of play, as load times between shots and holes get to be a bit much. Still, it's a small price to pay for a solid game. **Dan**

Hot Shots Golf it isn't, but it's not too far off. I don't think it's possible to make a more obnoxiously cute game that involves steel clubs and a small, white ball than Swing Away on the PS2. Pastel colors, cute an'me-style players, pre-pubescent voices, and melodramatic reaction shots may turn off serious golf players, but it shouldn't. The game is challenging and the graphics are great, save a few minor choppy animations and camera pans here and there. There aren't that many play modes (like Skins, Fourplay), but there is a course editor, and a really cool Story Mode that adds tons of depth to this pleasantly fun golf game. **Kraig**

I couldn't wait to get my hands on the first golf game for PS2, and was especially excited about SAG because of its resemblance to the now classic Hot Shots series for PS. While there's **no question that it sports absolutely beautiful eye-candy** and brings courses alive with amazing detail, I'm a little bummed out to report that the feel of the game doesn't stack up. I found the delay between taking my swing and watching the onscreen follow-through detached me from the game and left me feeling like I was coaching a player instead of being the player. Putting is also unacceptably stiff as my ball appeared to stop abruptly instead of trickling to a stop. **Joe**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	7	7	8

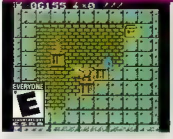
Animorphs

Publisher: Ubi Soft
Developer: RunnyFun
Featured In: *EGM* #133
Players: 1
Best Feature: True to the kid's books
Worst Feature: Mice-fighting aliens
Supports: None
Web Site: www.ubisoft.com

If I didn't know any better, I'd say this was **a terribly hacked-up foreign version of Pokémon**. While Animorphs is ambitious and does a fine job of translating the books into a video game, (it's even presented by the book's publisher, Scholastic), there isn't much originality here. You start in a little village and have the ability to talk to all sorts of people, and run into little creatures. Instead of sickeningly cute Pokémon, Animorphs has mice, goats, snakes, dogs and other such animals. Instead of capturing these beasts after defeating them, you simply morph into them. The more battles you win, the more animals you can morph into, and the further you progress, the more exotic the animals become. The password system is terrible, filled with tons of different symbols to jot down and scroll through. Like 99% of games out there, it's your job to save the day—in this case, from a race of evil, mind-controlling aliens who plan on taking over the Earth. OK, so it's not very unique—it's a Pokémon rip-off, but it's not too bad of one. **Shawn**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
5	5	2	6

Monster Rancher Explorer



Publisher: Tecmo
Developer: Tecmo
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1
Best Feature: Simple gameplay
Worst Feature: Stiff control and boring puzzles
Supports: Link Cable
Web Site: www.tecmoinc.com

When I first popped Monster Rancher Explorer into my trusty Game Boy, I was reminded of the glory days of the NES—simple graphics and unique gameplay hooks. As I got further into the game, though, I was reminded about another aspect of the glory days—nostalgia aside, most games really weren't that good back then either. Monster Rancher Explorer **initially looks fun, but quickly gets repetitive**. The game takes place in a mysterious tower that becomes overrun with monsters. Ascending the tower requires moving through each floor and solving a key/locked door puzzle; you possess the ability to create and destroy boxes at will, using them as stepladders to navigate those puzzles. The problem with the control is that your character moves around very rigidly. The puzzles themselves are adequately challenging, but tend to get repetitive after about the 10th stage. Boss fights every 10 levels and being able to unlock monster assistants helps to alleviate this problem somewhat, but not enough to maintain interest in MRE long term. **Andrew**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
4	4	7	5

Test Drive Cycles

EVERYONE
E
120
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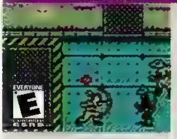
Publisher: Infogrames
Developer: Xantera
Featured In: N/A
Players: 1-2
Best Feature: Pseudo scaling
Worst Feature: Simple, sloppy control
Supports: Link Cable
Web Site: www.infogrames.com

It doesn't matter that TDC is chock-full of race modes, features over 10 real-life bike types with assignable power-up attributes, tons of tracks and surprisingly detailed graphics. Nor does it matter that it has an interesting Cop Chase Mode that allows you to dish out tickets to crotch-rocket speedsters, or that you can link up with a chum for some two-player fun. It doesn't matter because **the actual racing part of the game sucks**. Sure it's got all the gravy, but when you get to actual meat of the game—the racing itself—things fall apart. All too often I'd get into a groove in the Tournament Mode and then come across a fundamental flaw that zapped the fun right from the game. Most of the time it was the tedious turning process, thanks to the unrefined control. This really threw a wrench into the works. Other times, the game suffered from a general lack of challenge in a lot of the races (outside of the difficulty caused by the control). TDC isn't a total loss, but it's not what it should've been. Get another racing game instead. **Shawn**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
8	5	4	4

Turok 3



Publisher: Acclaim
Developer: Bit Managers
Featured In: *EGM* #134
Players: 1
Best Feature: Vehicle type of gameplay
Worst Feature: Tedious levels
Supports: None
Web Site: www.acclaim.com

I've said this time and time again in the past, but nine times out of 10, the GBC version of a big console game is going to suck—such is the case with Turok 3. Granted, **it looks nice, but it's just not that fun to play**. Each of the game's five main levels is broken up into two gameplay types. One is a 3/4-overhead perspective vehicle-based jaunt, where Turok gets to show off his driving skills in a tank, jeep and power boat. The other is a side-scrolling, kill-the-enemies and-find-a-key sort of thing. The vehicle stuff can be entertaining (though I don't remember this from any N64 Turok game), but the side-scrolling areas are ridiculous. On various levels (an enemy compound, prison, forest, etc.), you're confronted by enemies who just keep coming and coming no matter what you do. The whole process is wildly tedious and repetitive. Controls are clunky, which is only made worse by the fact that health packs give back only about 1/10th of your total health (although some packs respawn). There's no good reason to buy this game—so don't. **Shawn**

VISUALS	SOUND	INGENUITY	REPLAY
7	3	4	3

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Just days after surviving the grisly disaster at the mansion lab, Jill Valentine resigns from S.T.A.R.S. and attempts to escape a nightmarish city in ruins. Trapped in a town crawling with hordes of flesh-eating zombies, hideous mutants, and a relentless new nemesis, she must rely on cunning and brute force to stay alive. What she soon discovers is that the evil created by Umbrella Corporation's bio-tech terror is even more horrifying than she ever imagined...

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E
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

EVERYONE RATING: The E Replaced The Previous K-A Rating Last Year. Suitable For Kids Ages 6 And Up, E-Rated Games May Contain Minimal Violence Or Crude Language.

TEEN
TM
T
AGES 13+
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

TEEN RATING: Contains Suggestive Themes, Mild Or Strong Language And Animated Violence. Some Parents May Want To Supervise Children Playing T-Rated Games.

MATURE
TM
M
AGES 17+
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

MATURE RATING: These Games Contain More Adult Themes, Such As Blood And Gore, Stronger Language And Sexual Themes. Deemed Not Suitable For Those Under 17.

ADULTS ONLY
TM
AO
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

ADULTS ONLY RATING: The Extreme Of The Ratings, Suitable For Adults Only. Packs Sexual Themes And Extreme Violence. Console Manufacturers Have Yet To Allow An AO-Rated Game.

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■ Silver

Review Archive

EGM's Last 102 Reviews From EGM #131 – 135

	Game	Publisher	Best Feature	Worst Feature	Scores			Issue #
	Dreamcast							
	4 Wheel Thunder	Midway	Solid Framerate	Too Difficult	6.0	7.5	6.5	132
	Aerowings 2	Crave	You Can Shoot Stuff Now	You Don't Get Any Air-To-Ground Missions	4.0			134
■	Bust-A-Move 4	Taito	Addictive Gameplay	Sickeningly Cute	8.0			134
	Cannon Spike	Capcom	Old-School Gameplay	Levels Too Short	6.0	6.5	6.0	135
	Deep Fighter	Ubi Soft	Nice Graphics, Lots Of Missions	Controls, Tough Bosses	7.5			132
	Draconus: Cult of the Wyrm	Crave	Level Design	Enemy AI	8.0	5.5	7.5	133
■	Ecco the Dolphin: Defender of Future	Sega	Gorgeous Graphics And Sound	Tough Learning Curve	9.0	9.5	6.0	135
	Evolution 2: Far Off Promise	Ubi Soft	Nice Combat Engine	The Bosses Are Mean	7.0	4.5	7.0	132
	F1 World Grand Prix	Sega	Completely Customized Setups	Slows Down With Lots Of Cars	8.0	8.0	7.0	132
	Fur Fighters	Acclaim	Huge Variety Of Gameplay Styles	Some Areas Get Tedious	7.5			133
	Gauntlet Legends	Midway	Smooth, Even In Four-Player	Damn This Game Is Hard	8.0	7.0	5.5	132
	Grand Theft Auto 2	Rockstar	Graphics	Analog Control Feels Weird	8.5	6.0	5.0	132
	Gunbird 2	Capcom	Old-School Shootin' Fun	Often Can't Avoid Death	7.0	7.5	5.0	135
	MagForce Racing	Crave	Smooth Framerate	Tripod Vehicles	5.0	2.0	5.5	133
■	Marvel vs Capcom 2	Capcom	Awesome Graphics And Gameplay	It Doesn't Cook Breakfast	9.0	9.5	8.0	133
●	MDK 2	Interplay	Gorgeous Visuals, Dark Humor	Some Might Not "Get" The Humor	9.0	9.0	9.0	131
■	Power Stone 2	Capcom	Awesome Environments	Can Be Confusing With Four Players	9.0	8.5	8.5	134
	Railroad Tycoon II	G.O.D.	Strategic Depth Online Play	Joypad A Little Too Cumbersome	7.0			135
	Rainbow Six	Red Storm Ent.	Realistic, Lots Of Missions	Complicated Controls	6.5	7.0	8.5	133
	Ring, The	Infogrames	Detailed Environments	Sound Or Controls, It's A Toss-Up	3.0	6.0	5.0	134
	Rush 2049	Midway	Battle Mode	Mostly Just The Same Ol' Rush	6.0			135
■	Seaman	Sega	Deadpan Humor, Opinions On Life	Little Loose On Voice Recognition	8.5	6.5	9.0	134
	Silver	Infogrames	Story Line, Voice-Overs	Battle System	7.0	6.0	7.0	134
	South Park Rally	Acclaim	Graphics, Tons Of SP Characters	Pretty Much Everything Else	3.0			134
	Space Channel 5	Sega	Funky Music, Graphics, Flash	Video Is Sometimes Out Of Sync	8.0	8.0	7.0	133
■	Street Fighter III: Double Impact	Capcom	Smooth Animation	No 3rd Strike	7.0	9.0	8.0	134
	Super Magnetic Neo	Crave	Colorful Graphics	Cheap Deaths	6.5	3.0	6.0	133
■	Test Drive V-Rally	Infogrames	Track Editor	Some Slowdown	8.5	9.0	7.5	135
●	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater	Crave	Graphics	Nothing Really	9.5	8.5	9.0	132
	Toy Story 2	Activision	Standard Disney 3D Platform Game	Exact Same Game From Six Months Ago	5.0			134
■	Virtual On: Oratorio Tangram	Activision	Solid, Colorful Graphics	Noticeable Slowdown In Multiplayer	8.5			133
■	Virtua Tennis	Sega	Awesome Graphics And Animation	Limited Replay Value	7.5	8.0	9.5	134
	Wacky Races	Infogrames	Cel-Shaded Graphics	Gets Too Hard	7.0	6.5	7.5	134
	WDW Magical Racing	Eidos	Fanciful Music And Graphics	Too Tough For Kiddie Theme	5.5			135
	World Series Baseball 2K1	Sega	Graphics	No Fielding	3.0	5.0	2.5	135
	WWF Royal Rumble	THQ	Nine Wrasslers On Screen At Once!	Not Enough Modes And Options	5.5	4.0	5.5	135
	Nintendo 64							
	Army Men: Sarge's Heroes 2	3DO	Variety Of Weapons, And The Music	Touchy Control	4.0	4.0	4.0	135
	Duck Dodgers	Infogrames	Looney Tunes Graphics	Simple Gameplay	3.0	4.5	3.0	133
	Fighter Destiny 2	South Peak	Unique Point Scoring System	Unresponsive Control	3.0			134
■	Indy Racing 2000	Infogrames	Fast And Fun Racing Gameplay	The Graphics Are Slightly Blurry	8.0			134
■	Kirby 64: The Crystal Shards	Nintendo	Old-School 2D Gameplay In 3D	None	9.0	7.5	8.5	134
●	Madden NFL 2001	EA Sports	Sharp And Smooth Graphics	Madden/Summeral Commentary	9.0			135
●	Mario Tennis	Nintendo	Doubles Action	Losing At Multiplayer	9.5	9.0	8.5	135
	Perfect Dark	Rare	Limitless Multiplayer Options	Stuttering Framerate	10	9.5	10	131
	PGA European Tour	Infogrames	Real Courses	Too Hard To Pick Just One	1.5	3.0	1.0	134
	Rally Challenge 2000	South Peak	Race Options	Graphics, Especially In Multiplayer Modes	3.5			134
■	StarCraft 64	Nintendo	Best RTS Console Controls Ever	Slowdown	9.0	8.0	7.5	134
	PlayStation							
	Action Bass	Take 2	It Only Costs 10 Bucks	It's Not Worth Much More Than That	4.5			135
	Armorines	Acclaim	Exploding Spiders	The Graphics Are Pretty Ugly	4.0	3.5	3.0	133
	Army Men: World War	3DO	Sound Effects	Glitches, Bugginess	3.0	2.0	2.5	132

	Game	Publisher	Best Feature	Worst Feature	Scores			Issue #
	Bust-A-Groove 2	Enix	Some Cool Level Effects	Music Isn't Very Good	6.0	6.0	6.5	134
●	Chrono Cross	Square EA	Stunning Music	The Game Ends	9.5	10	10	134
	Digimon World	Bandai	Tamagotchi-esque Breeding	No Analog Control	7.0	3.0	2.5	134
	Expendable	Infogrames	Fluffy Special Effects	Shoddy Controls	3.5	2.5	2.5	132
	Flintstones Bedrock Bowling	South Peak	The Official Voice Actors Do The Lines	It's Not Bowling. Why, God, Why?	0.5			135
	Gekido	Interplay	It's A Beat-'Em-Up On The PS	Frustratingly Cheap Hits	6.5	4.5	4.0	132
	Grind Session	Sony CEA	Tony Hawk's Pro Skater Feel	It's Just Not Very Original	6.0	5.5	5.0	132
	Grudge Warriors	Take 2	No One Forces You To Play	Does Not Provide Any Entertainment	1.5			133
	Iron Soldier 3	Vatical	Two-Player Cooperative Mode	Some Missions Too Darn Frustrating	5.5			134
	ISS Pro Evolution	Konami	Spiffy Graphics And Animation	Automatic Player Switching	7.0	7.0	8.0	134
	Koudelka	Infogrames	CG Movies	Uneven Enemy Difficulty	6.0			133
	Kurt Warner's Arena Football Unleashed	Midway	High Scoring	Limited Playbook	6.5	6.5	5.0	132
	Legend of Dragoon	Sony CEA	Beautiful CG Cinemas	Robotic-Sounding Dialogue	6.0	5.0	5.5	133
	Legend of Mana	Square EA	Great 2D Hand-Drawn Artwork	Weak Battle System	6.0	7.0	5.0	133
●	Madden NFL 2001	EA Sports	Madden Cards	Madden Opening His Mouth	9.5	9.0	9.5	135
	Monster Rancher Battle Card: Ep. II	Tecmo	Random Monster Generator Using CD	Repetitive Gameplay	6.5	6.0	7.0	134
	Mortal Kombat: Special Forces	Midway	Beat Guys Up!	The Whole Game Is Half-Assed	1.5			135
	NCAA Football 2001	EA Sports	Still A Very Competent Sim	Not Much Different Than Last Edition	7.5	8.5	6.5	134
	NCAA GameBreaker 2001	989 Sports	Keith Jackson	Suspect AI	7.0	7.5	7.0	135
	NFL GameDay 2001	989 Sports	Tackles Animations	AI Could Still Be Better	6.5	7.0	7.5	135
	N.Gen Racing	Infogrames	Awesome Speed	Awkward Button Configuration	7.0	6.0	7.5	133
	Nightmare Creatures II	Konami	Movie-Like Production Values	Cheap, Crappy Gameplay	4.0	4.5	6.0	132
■	Parasite Eve II	Square EA	Resident Evil-Style Gameplay	Tedious Puzzles	8.0	8.0	8.5	135
	Pro Pinball: Fantastic Journey	Empire Interactive	The Price	There's Only One Table	7.5			135
■	Rayman 2	Ubi Soft	Excellent Style	Camera	9.0	8.5	8.5	133
	Rhapsody	Atlus	Great Dialogue	Boring Fighting	7.0	6.0	7.0	133
■	RPG Maker	Agetec	Comprehensive Suite Of Tools	Steep Learning Curve	9.0	8.0	9.0	133
	Samurai Shodown: Warrior's Rage	SNK	You Can Turn It Off	For SNK's Last U.S. Effort, It Blows	2.0			135
	Spider-Man	Activision	Swinging Around As Spidey	Camera In Enclosed Areas	8.0	8.5	7.0	135
	Surf Riders	Ubi Soft	Cool Surf Tunes	Gets Repetitive Quickly	3.0			133
	Tenchu 2: Birth of the Stealth Assassins	Activision	Day And Night Missions	Camera, Sluggish Control	7.0	7.5	6.5	135
	Test Drive Le Mans	Infogrames	Lots Of Options	Bad Music And Sound	7.5	7.5	6.0	132
	Threads of Fate	Square EA	Two Separate Quests	Annoying Autoaiming	6.5	5.5	6.5	133
●	Valkyrie Profile	Enix	Battle System, Beautiful Graphics	Sometimes A Little Monotonous	9.0	9.0	9.0	134
	Vampire Hunter D	Jaleco	Slick Anime Styling	Frustrating Controls	4.0	4.5	4.5	135
	Who Wants To Be A Millionaire	Sony CEA	Technically Faithful To TV Show	Lame Multiplayer Mode	6.0	6.5	6.5	133
	X-Men: Mutant Academy	Activision	Great For Fans	Lame AI/Combos	7.0	6.5	7.0	134
Game Boy/Game Boy Color								
	1942	Capcom	Old-School Vertical Shootin'	Horrible, Horrible "Music"	5.5			134
	All-Star Baseball 2001	Acclaim	Simple, Yet Still Fun	No Multiplayer	6.5			134
	Crystalis	Nintendo	Graphics	Aggravating Play Mechanics	6.5	7.5	6.5	134
■	Dragon Warrior I&II	Enix	Two RPGs For The Price Of One	Games Feel Slightly Dated	9.5	8.5	7.0	135
■	Frogger 2	Majesco	Classic Frogger Gameplay	Questionable Maze Design	8.0			135
	Galaga	Majesco	It's Portable Galaga	Can't See Incoming Attacks	7.0			135
	Perfect Dark	Rare	Gameplay Variety	Idiotic Guards	5.5	5.5	5.0	135
	Q*Bert	Majesco	Just Like Arcade	Controls Are A Bit Tough	5.0			135
	Spider-Man	Activision	Looks Really Good For A GBC Game	Far Too Difficult For The Youngins	7.5			135
	Test Drive Le Mans	Infogrames	Loads Of Cars, Tracks And Features	Frustrating Control	3.0			135
	Tomb Raider	THQ	True Tomb Raider Feel	Monotonous At Times	8.5	8.0	7.0	133
●	Wario Land 3	Nintendo	Excellent Graphics, Difficult Puzzles	Bosses Are Too Easy	8.5	9.5	9.0	133
■	Wacky Races	Infogrames	Smooth 3D Scrolling On The GBC	The Whole Experience Is Far Too Brief	8.0			134
■	Warlocked	Nintendo	Those Wizards	Troops Get Lost Too Easily	9.0	8.5	8.5	135
	X-Men: Mutant Academy	Activision	Graphics	Way Way Way Too Simple	2.0			134

Reader Reviews

Here's your chance to vent your views on recently released games. If you have something you think needs to be said about either one of our reviews or a game you've recently bought, e-mail us your thoughts at review_crew@ziffdavis.com or write to us at the following address:

EGM Reader Reviews, P.O. Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338

Draconus

What we said:

"The story is interesting, with excellent narration...just when you start hating this game, something cool happens..."

How we rated it:

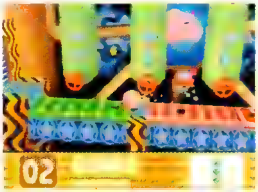
8.0 5.5 7.5

What you said:

People who don't like Draconus are smoking crack. The game has a few minor problems, but nothing that takes away from the overall experience. Once I got used to the battle system, and earned some weapon and armor upgrades (one of the best features of the game, by the way), I had a TON of fun playing through this game. And the nice thing is, there are so many levels...HUGE levels, filled with all sorts of enemies. When you throw in the incredible graphics, crystal-clear sound effects and excellent narration, I don't think you can find a better action/adventure title on the Dreamcast. I couldn't help but get caught up in the story either (this really kept me going level after level). When you're all done with one adventure, you have a whole new character to play through the game with again. You can't beat that.

Sean Cauffield
Woodridge, IL

"People who don't like Draconus are smoking crack."



Kirby 64

What we said:

"It looks like a kid's game, but do not be fooled!...slower pace and low difficulty made it hard to stay interested...for anyone who loves a solid platformer..."

How we rated it:

9.0 7.5 8.5

What you said:

I think I'd be happy if Kirby games were the only carts that came out on the N64. There's something about the way Kirby and his world are so cute, yet every level and boss fight have so much action and emotion involved. I love this juxtaposition of elements. I realize there are times when the game is really easy, and this is a bummer. But 90 percent of the time things kick a whole lot of butt. Take the graphics and neat-o effects for instance. And what about the interesting level design? That's not to mention the variety of enemies, and how you can transform into so many combinations of things. For my money, there is no other game that's as fun as Kirby (except maybe the Wario Land games). I'd give this one a perfect 10.

Bethany Whitaker
Grand Island, NE

Tomb Raider GBC

What we said:

"The gameplay is adequate for a handheld action/adventure, but could definitely be better...isn't mindless side-scrolling crap like other GBC titles..."

How we rated it:

8.5 8.0 7.0

What you said:

For a Game Boy Color game, Tomb Raider looks incredible (especially the animation). But when you look past the graphics and all of that stuff, there isn't much to the game. Many of the levels look the same, and really all of the puzzles are the same sort of thing over and over and over again. And where in the heck are boss battles? It's almost like Core got so far in the development process but then had to get the game out on schedule, so they

Chrono Cross

What we said:

"Chrono Cross is a masterpiece, plain and simple...There just isn't a weak link...Buy this game!"

How we rated it:

9.5 10 10

What you said:

Graphically, Chrono Cross is almost flawless. The game features pre-rendered backgrounds, same as FFVII and FFVIII, with 3D characters. The characters themselves look good, and do not suffer the pixelation problem that FFVIII had. In terms of music, Chrono Cross really shines. Featuring probably some of the best works of Yasunori Mitsuda, the music is truly something to remember. The opening theme was excellently done, and complements the intro quite well. Other notable tracks are the overworld themes, as well as the boss theme. My only complaint is the final boss song, which....well I'll let you hear it yourself. All in all, Chrono Cross is a very good RPG. It has everything a good RPG should have: interesting story, challenging battles, excellent music. However, compared to most RPGs today, Chrono Cross is quite short. Even the creators admitted that you can finish the game in 30 hours. Besides that, Chrono Cross is probably not suitable for those searching for a simple story, as the story is anything but that. Some of the major battles are also almost impossible to win, which gets frustrating sometimes, although luckily there aren't many of these. But if you don't mind any of these, then rest assured: Chrono Cross is the excellent game it is hyped up to be, and delivers much more than that. Rating: 10

James Ng
address withheld

"It has everything a good RPG should have: interesting story, challenging battles, excellent music."

failed to implement more puzzles and other gameplay ideas. Certain areas can be fun, but I wish I wouldn't have bought it.

Matt Pilford
Albuquerque, NM

Wario Land 3

What we said:

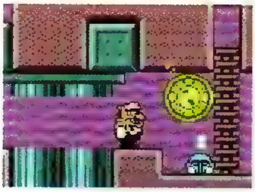
"Wario 3 is an even mix of platform-style gameplay and puzzle solving... Is it wrong for a man to be in love with a video game?..."

How we rated it:

8.5 9.5 9.0

What you said:

Maybe I'm insane, but Wario Land 3 doesn't do much for me. I think a lot of it has to do with the fact that you can't die. Sure, it's innovative or whatever but it's also annoying. Half of the time I didn't know where I was supposed to go next, and the rest of the time I didn't know what I was supposed to do. Am I supposed to be on fire? Or maybe a ball of yarn? I don't know. Maybe I'm just not hardcore enough or something, but I like games that are a little bit more linear. I'm going to pick up Perfect Dark instead.



Bobby Jones
Dayton, OH

WWF SmackDown!

What we said:

"The game engine far surpasses anything else on the market...The thing controls like a dream...enough WWF schtick to satisfy any fan..."

The Rock
The Undertaker
Mark Henry
Debra

How we rated it:

9.0 8.5 9.0 8.5

What you said:

The gameplay...I can't figure why people give their praises here. The controls are simple, but despite the fast rate of the game, that's not a good thing. Similar to the problems in how the moves look, the execution seems rather departed from the action. That might sound a little crazy at first, but once you realize you can't land more than two hits in almost any situation, it becomes apparent that the way you win in this game is just timing throws, and that really is not much fun. The story mode, or whatever you want to call it, adds very little to the game, the fact it exists is welcome, but the writing displayed is groaningly matter-of-fact, and downright terrible in wording. (Farooq's name is actually misspelled to give you an idea of quality.) There just isn't enough here to get excited about, all that it really adds to gameplay is occasionally weakening someone. And the rewards, because of the totally lackluster create a wrestler feature, are no encouragement to keep going. The game comes off as pretty soulless in my eyes; nothing gives you the idea that the developers really wanted to make something great. The fact that the quality varies so much between characters is an extreme letdown. The lack of real impact in the moves keeps you from feeling dominant or toasted. It's a playable game certainly, but there is no real reward for running through the season mode extensively (unless you NEED to look at a few extra people), weapons feel useless (no horrible noises or even real damage), and there's just not much that is genuinely impressive. Rent it first—this isn't a groundbreaking title, and I don't suggest just running out and buying it if you haven't already. Rating: 6.4

Arkala Miserachordia
Portland, ME

X-Men: Mutant Academy

What we said:

"While the game has responsive controls, the enemy AI is surprisingly dimwitted...after extended play or against the CPU it gets dull..."

How we rated it:

7.0 6.5 7.0

"Any fan of X-Men will be hard-pressed to find a game that's as good..."

What you said:

This is the best fighting game I've played. Any fan of X-Men will be hard-pressed to find a game that's as good that has all of the Marvel Mutants in one place. And once you finish the game, there are tons of secrets to find (hidden characters, modes and a bunch of other stuff). I think it's not getting the attention it deserves mainly because it's not from Namco or Capcom. This is a load of crap in my opinion, since X-Men has all of the gameplay, modes, characters and options Tekken and the Street Fighter games ever had. Excelsior!

Chris Shepherd
Iowa City, IA

SYDNEY CONVENTION CENTER

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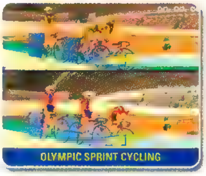
SHOOTING CENTER, CECIL PARK

SKEET SHOOTING

VELODROME, BANKSTOWN



OLYMPIC SPRINT CYCLING

SYDNEY INTERNATIONAL REGATTA CENTER, PENRITH LAKES

KAYAK K1 SLALOM

SYDNEY INTERNATIONAL AQUATIC CENTER

100M FREESTYLE SWIMMING

10M PLATFORM DIVING

EVERYONE
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CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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Grab the Gold!

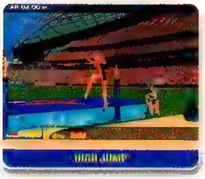
On September 15th, 2000 the best athletes from all over the world will gather in the idyllic sunshine climate of Sydney, the cultural capital of Australia, for the world's greatest competition: The Olympic Games. To celebrate the games Eidos Interactive is bringing Sydney 2000 - The Official Video Game of the Olympic Games to the PlayStation game console, Dreamcast and the PC.

Sydney 2000 features 32 countries in 12 events, TV style presentation, competitive multi-player modes, authentic Olympic environments and fluid real-time animation; creating an ultra realistic event sports video game experience. Compete in the heat of international competition with advanced motion-captured animation and incredible details like facial expressions and accurate breathing rates. Grab the gold in the most spectacular and challenging event sports game this year. Let the games begin, mate.

GAMEPLAY FEATURES:

- 12 challenging events
- 32 countries
- 4 gameplay modes: head-to-head, Olympic, coaching, and arcade
- 2 gold medal commentators

OLYMPIC STADIUM



HIGH JUMP

JAVELIN

100M SPRINT

HAMMER

110M HURDLES

TRIPLE JUMP

Sydney 2000

LET THE GAMES BEGIN, MATE.

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Tricks of the Trade

By Trickman Terry
tricks@ziffdavis.com

TRICK OF THE MONTH

Tenchu 2: Birth of the Stealth Assassins

(For PlayStation)

Awesome Cheats

Unlock Every Stage
From the Stage Select Screen, hold Square+Circle+Select. While holding these buttons, press Right, Right, [illegible] [illegible] Down, R2.

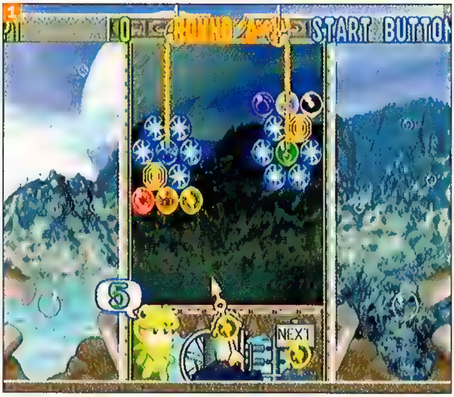
Unlock All Items
On the Items Screen, press Square, Square, Square, Circle, Square, Circle, Circle, Left, Up, Down, Right, R2, R2.

Increase All Inventory Items by 1
On the Items Screen, hold Square+R1. While holding these buttons, press Right, Down, Left, Up. Repeat this code to get up to 98 of any item.

Regain Energy
Pause the game during play and hold Square. While holding Square, press Left, Right, Up, Down. Then let go of Square. Your game will continue with a 100% life bar.

Unlock Tatsumaru
From the Stage Select Screen, hold Square+Circle. While holding these buttons, press R1, R2, L2, L1, Up, Down, Left, Right, Select.

Brandon Newkirk
Boston, MA



2
DREAMCAST

Bust-A-Move 4

Cool Codes

On the Title Screen with "Press Start Button" flashing, enter the following codes for the results shown.

1 **Another World**
X, Left, Right, Left, X. You will hear a sound if the code was entered correctly. Now you will have more puzzles available in Puzzle mode under the Arcade setting.

More Characters
Right, Right, X, Left, Left. You will hear a cheering sound if entered correctly. On the Character Select Screen, you will have access to more characters.

Tarot Card Reading
Up, X, Down, X, Up. You'll hear a sound if entered correctly. At the game menu, go into the Option Screen to see the new Tarot Reading (Love) option.

tricks
@ziffdavis.com

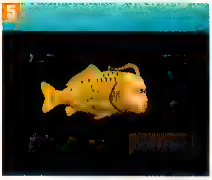
We want your tricks! We want to include your best codes and tricks in every issue, to put along with all our great tricks we pick in every issue. You can even win prizes if we pick yours as Trick of the Month!
*see page 219 for contest rules

Talk Demo
You must first enter the More Characters and Tarot Card Reading codes as shown above before entering this code. Then at the Title Screen, press X, Up, Left, Down, Right, Up, X, Down, Left, Up, Right, Down, X. At the game menu, go into the Option Screen to see the new Talk Demo option.

MagForce Racing

All Tripods, Classes and Tracks

2 On the Main Menu, highlight the vehicle select and hold the X+Y buttons simultaneously. While holding these, press Up, Left, Down, Right, Right, Up, Down, Right. You will hear a sound when the trick is entered correctly. Now access the vehicle and track select options to see all the new tripods, classes and tracks at your disposal.



Striker Pro 2000

Be the Ball

3 In the middle of the game, press Start to pause. Now press Up, Up, Down, Down, Left, Left, Right, Right, L-Trigger, L-Trigger, L-Trigger, R-Trigger, L-Trigger, R-Trigger, L-Trigger. Press Start to go back to the game and then hold the L-Trigger+R-Trigger simultaneously and hold Right on the D-pad to move the ball up, and hold Left on the D-pad to move the ball down.

Seaman

Rapid Evolution

4 Once your Seaman eggs have hatched and four have been eaten by the Nautilus, they will evolve. Once this evolution process happens, you can do this trick. After you've saved your session, turn the Dreamcast off and pop open the lid on your system. Turn on the power again and when the screen comes up, access the Settings file. Change the Date/Time to one or two days ahead. Set it and then start up 5 the Seaman game again. The game will think that this time has actually passed. Repeat this process to develop your Seaman more rapidly. Remember to clean the tank and heat it each time to make sure he's growing well.

the PERFECT DARK insider

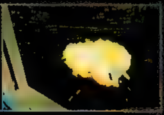
Your monthly source for anything and everything Perfect Dark

Got your own PD tidbit for us? Send us a letter or e-mail us at EGM@ziffdavis.com, subject: Perfect Dark. If we choose your letter you'll get your name in *EGM* and maybe even a little somethin' extra!

PERFECT DUCK HUNT

On the first solo mission, dataDyne Central - Defection, you can do a little target practice on the passing cars. Just work your way up to one of the rooms with a wall taken up by windows and shoot out one of them. Now watch for a passing car, take aim and fire! Thanks to Joe Wags for this fun little waste of time.

Wait for it... Wait for it...



KABLAM!!!

BIG OUCH!

This is another method that works in the firing range. Position yourself so that you are halfway between the door of the firing range and the entrance to it. If you are far enough in the range, you can press Start to access your weapons. Pick the Crossbow and fire away at the lackeys! Oh, how fun it is to stick a plethora of arrows into these clowns!

EASIER ESCAPE

In Area 51 - Escape, get to the end of the level with the UFO. When Jonathan and Elvis are talking, make your way up the ramp and across to the computers that control the hangar doors. When Jonathan talks about escaping on the hoverbike, access the computer to the inner door, then the outer door. The cinema will show the UFO escaping. This is much quicker than having Jonathan do it all. Thanks go to James E. Messina.

SECRET SHAFT

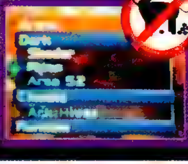
Note: You need an explosive weapon such as the Rocket Launcher to use in the Cheat Solo Missions, in order to do this trick.

In the Carrington Institute, access the computer in "hacker central" with the Cheats on it. If you've unlocked the Rocket Launcher under Weapons for Jo in Solo, turn on this cheat. Exit this menu. Choose Cheat Solo Missions. Play the dataDyne Central - Defection level on any difficulty. Make your way down the platform in the beginning of the level and shoot the first guard and go in the double doors and shoot the guard around the corner. Go down the ramps and over by the security hub. To the right of the security hub is a large shaft. Switch to the Rocket Launcher and fire a rocket at the shaft. This will make a hole in the middle of it. Go through the hole and you will drop into a small room. Turn to your left and fire another rocket at the far wall. This will make a hole that you can see after the smoke clears. Now switch to your Punch and go through the hole. You will be in Cassandra's office. Run up and punch her to take her out, but don't shoot her or you will fail the mission. Exit through the large doors to surprise the guards, which makes them easier to kill. Thanks go to Loren Walsted for this secret!

ROCKET LAUNCHER
ROCKET LAUNCHER

De Vries' necklac

BS RUMOR WATCH



There's a pretty realistic-looking hoax going around that involves the rumored GoldenEye Archives level. Someone made up a picture to look like it really existed in the game. Alas, this is not true. This one's been fooling a lot of people, so it gets an 8.5 out of 10 on the ***EGM-PD-BS-O-METER.***

SWEET SCENARIOS

There seems to be a thriller/scary movie theme for this month's scenarios. Bring up your Combat Simulator and try these settings:

SURVIVAL HORROR (RESIDENT EVIL)

Check out this one sent in by Richard Sue.

Scenario: Combat
Options: No Radar and Fast Movement
Arena: Felicity
Weapons: Combat Knife, Falcon 2, DY357 Magnum, Shotgun, AR34, Rocket Launcher
Optional Weapon Substitutions: Shield, Reaper, Mines, Devastator, Laser or Farsight XR-20
Limits: Your Choice
Simulants: 2-5 FistMeatSims, 1-2 FistHardSims, and 1 RocketDarkSim
Teams: Humans VS. Simulants
Other Team Options: Be the Blue team and name your team S.T.A.R.S. Make the Sims be the Brown team
Soundtrack Music: Maian Tears

HOLLOW MAN

Scenario: Combat
Options: Default (for a more difficult challenge, try No Radar
Arena: Felicity
Weapons:
2 Tranquilizers,
2 Falcon 2 guns, Thermal Goggles, Cloaking Device
Limits: Team Score of 10 or 10 minutes
Simulants: None
Teams: 3 on 1
(Three people must wear the Thermal Goggles and the one person that plays as Hollow Man will have the Cloaking Device on.) In the scenario, the three other people must try to kill the invisible player. Thanks go to Ryan Posey for this scenario.

TOP 10 TRICKS

The top 10 games of the last month given the full-on *Trickman* treatment:

1. Perfect Dark (N64)

Weird Cassandra in Cinema
In the third part of the first mission (dataDyne Central - Extraction), play on Agent setting and finish first objective. Go to the last room where Cassandra talks to you with her bodyguards. Before finishing the second objective (defeating her bodyguards), run up the stairs and catch up with Cassandra before she leaves the building. Shoot her multiple times to get rid of her shields. Follow her outside, she'll stand still. Now shoot up her face until it looks bad. Now go back into the building and take care of her guards. This completes the second objective. Go back outside and rendezvous at the helipad (third objective). While the cinema is playing, you'll see that her face will be mangled.

2. Pokémon Trading Card (GB)

Find Codes
Send in codes for this game. If we print yours, you'll score a free game!

3. Pokémon (Yellow) (GB)

Easy Level Gain
To easily gain experience, switch the Pokémon you want to train with the top Pokémon on your list. When you go into battle, this Pokémon will appear. Switch to another Pokémon. Once you win the battle, the beginning Pokémon and the fighting Pokémon both gain experience points. This is especially useful if the Pokémon has no initial attack in its first form.

4. Tony Hawk's Pro Skater (PS)

Cool Codes
Enter the following cheat while paused during play. If done correctly, the screen will shake.

Blowout Trick
This blows open the game, and a new character. From the menu, access Career Mode. Begin a new game and press

NINTENDO 64

GoldenEye 007

Cheat Menu Button Codes
Enter these codes on the Cheat Menu Screen with the L-Shoulder and R-Shoulder buttons, C buttons and D-pad. You will hear a beep to confirm correct code entry. You will have to exit the Cheat Menu and enter it again to make each code appear. These codes are tricky, so make sure to hold the buttons for about one or two seconds before going to the next step of the code.

Gold PP7
Hold L+R-Shoulders and press Right, hold L+R-Shoulders and press Down, L-Shoulder+Up, hold L+R-Shoulders and press Down, C-Up, R-Shoulder+Up, hold L+R-Shoulders and press Right, L-Shoulder+Left, Down, L-Shoulder+C-Down.

All Guns
Down, Left, C-Up, Right, L-Shoulder+Down, L-Shoulder+Left, L-Shoulder+Up, C-Left, Left, C-Down.

2 2X Grenade Launcher
Press R-Shoulder+ Down, R-Shoulder+Up, Right, hold L+R-Shoulders and press C-Down, L-Shoulder+Right, R-Shoulder+Left, Left, Down, Up, R-Shoulder+C-Down.

2X Rocket Launcher
Press R-Shoulder+Right, L-Shoulder+Up, Down, Down, R-Shoulder+ C-Down, L-Shoulder+Left, L-Shoulder+C-Left, R-Shoulder+Up, R-Shoulder+Down, R-Shoulder+C-Left.

Indy Racing 2000

All Gold Cup Cars and Gallery Option

1 All Gold Cup Cars
From the Main Menu, access the Gold Cup option. Choose an empty file and put in YOU_DA_MAN for the name. On the Gold Cup Racing Menu, all the cars will be open and you will have golds for every set of cars.

Gallery Option
From the Main Menu, access the Gold Cup option. Choose an empty file and put in WOODY_COOKIES for the name. As soon as you choose "Done," the gallery option will appear.

1
00:00.39
18th
2/4
LAP TIME
POS
LAP
DRAFT
MPH
189

Here is a key to the functions of the gallery: A = Zoom in, B = Zoom out, C-Up = Rotate clockwise, C-Down = Rotate counter clockwise, L-Shift = Switch views, R-Shift = Switch galleries, Analog stick = Rotate view, Down on D-pad = Switch between top and side views and change animation rate, Start = Exit.

PLAYSTATION

Eagle One: Harrier Attack

Invincibility, Level Select and Infinite Ammunition

Invincibility
At the Main Menu Screen, access the Options Menu. Now press R1, L1, R2, L2, L1. You will hear a sound to confirm the trick was entered correctly.

3 Level Select
At the Main Menu Screen, access the Options Menu. Now press R1, L1, R2, L2, Start. You will hear a sound to confirm the trick was entered correctly.

Infinite Ammunition
At the Main Menu Screen, access the Options Menu. Now press R1, L1, R2, L2, R1. A tone will confirm if entered correctly.

NGEN Racing

Awesome Tricks
On the Main Menu Screen, enter the following tricks to acquire these results as shown below.

All Arcade Mode Tracks, Classes and Jets
R1, L1, R1, R2, L2, R2, L2, L1.

NGEN Mode Extra Jets
R1, R2, L1, L2, L2, L1, R2, R1.

400,000,000 Credits
R2, L2, R2, L1, R2, R1, R2, L1.

HEY, YOU; WANNA WIN FREE STUFF?

If your trick is selected as Trick of the Month, you will win a free GameShark provided by InterAct, and a Pro Shock, or a Hyper64, or a VIPER controller from Fire International. If you are given credit for submitting a hot trick in this section, you will win a free game. See page 289 for rules.

Note: If you send your trick by e-mail, you must include your real name and address.

Send your best tricks, codes, Web sites, anything that can help make games more fun or interesting to:

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P.O. Box 3338
Oak Brook IL
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tricks@ziffdavis.com

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TOP 10 TRICKS

Start to pause. Press and hold the L1 button and enter Circle, Right, Up, Down, Circle, Right, Up, Square, Triangle. The screen shakes if entered correctly. Go to the Main Menu Screen. Choose to continue the Career Mode and Officer Dick, all tapes, levels, medals, stats and FMV movies will become available.

5. Tony Hawk's Pro Skater (N64)

Awesome Cheats

All Tapes

Choose Career Mode from the Main Menu and begin your game. While playing, press Start to pause. Press and hold the L button. While holding it, press Right-C, Left, Up, Up-C, Up-C, Right, Down, Up. The screen will shake if entered correctly.

Faster Specials

Choose Career Mode from the Main Menu and begin your game. While playing, press Start to pause. Press and hold the L button. While holding it, press Up-C, Left, Down-C, Down-C, Up, Down, Right. The screen will shake if entered correctly.

6. Wario Land 3 (GB)

Find Codes

Send in codes for this game. If we print yours, you'll score a free game!

7. Spec Ops (PS)

Find Codes

Send in codes for this game. If we print yours, you'll score a free game!

8. Pokémon (Blue) (GB)

Fight Safari Zone Pokémon

This will allow you to fight and catch the Safari Zone Pokémon outside the Safari Zone. You must have a Pokémon with the Surf Ability. Go to the Safari Zone and enter the area where the Pokémon you are trying to catch is found. Stay there until the time runs out. Go to the Seafoam Islands by surfing south of Fuchsia City. Be sure you don't encounter any enemies on the way, or the trick won't work (this does not include the Pokémon in the water on the way there). On the edge of the islands, there is a strip of the screen that is

PLAYSTATION

NCAA Football 2001

Secret Codes

At the Main Menu, select the Game Settings. Then highlight and enter the Secret Codes Menu. Now press Select and enter any of these cheats. You'll hear "It's in the game" if entered correctly.

Full Poll

POPULARITY (Press R1 twice on the Poll Screen to view more team rankings.

Slower Players

CEMENTFEET

1 **All Stadiums Unlocked**

OPENSESAME

View CPU Plays

MINDREADER

Faster Players

SCRAMBLE

Faster Daytime Effects

DAYNIGHT

Maximum Attribute Points

BALLER

Maximum Recruiting Points

HEADCOACH

Receivers Always Catch

HANDSOFGLUE

Defense Always Intercepts

OSKIE

Wind at Maximum

SAFETY

Change the Date

Y2K

Juggernaut Team

BULLDOZER

Populous: The Beginning

Cheat Mode

At the Main Menu Screen, begin a New Game. Choose the first scenario; The Journey Begins. Move arrow onto a tree in the level and press X. Do this for every tree in the level. Then press Start to pause. You will see a new option at the bottom of the list called "Cheats." You can now access all buildings, spells and maximum mana!

X-Men: Mutant Academy

Unlock Everything

2 On the Main Menu Screen, press Select, Up, L2, R1, L1, R2. You will hear a voice if the code was entered correctly. Now go to the Arcade, Survival or Academy modes and you will be able to play as Toad, Mystique, Sabretooth and Magneto. In Cerebro mode, you will have access to all the cinemas and behind-the-scenes footage!

GAME BOY

Army Men

Essential Passwords

From the Main Menu Screen, move down and select Password. Now enter any of the symbol passwords below to open up various levels in the game.

Desert -

All Cactus Flats Levels: Machine Gun, Grenade, Machine Gun, Grenade.

All Casa Plastica Levels: Jeep, Jeep, Grenade, Machine Gun.

All Winding Canyon Levels: Machine Gun, Mortar, Machine Gun, Helicopter.

Alpine -

Prison Camp Levels: Plane, Machine Gun, Grenade, Machine Gun.

Winding River Levels: Plane, Tank, Mortar, Jeep.

All Levels Open

(Desert and Alpine): Plane, Tank, Plane, Machine Gun.

Croc

Open All Levels

On the Main Menu Screen, access the Password option. Now enter PQHPBFDHJB to get access to all levels, but no pickups.

Hot Wheels Stunt Track Racer

3 **All Vehicles and Levels**

On the Main Menu Screen, select the Password option and enter this code with the D-pad and buttons: Down, Left, Up, A, Down, Right.

Tazmanian Devil: Munching Madness

Level Passwords

China Level

BLGNGJPDFFTJ

Switzerland Level

LMBPBKTFKDPK

1-900-PRE VIEW
773 8439
The number to call for the latest cheats & gaming info
$1.49 per minute. Must be 18 years or older. Under 18 must have parents' permission.

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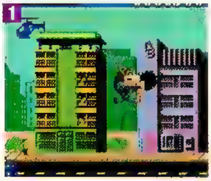

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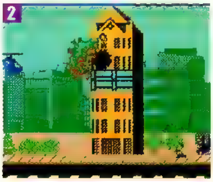
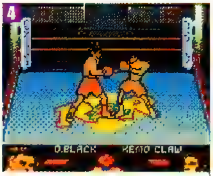


3

4


GameShark Codes

DREAMCAST

Jeremy McGrath Supercross 2000
Start On Lap Four
D1FB807BC0705041,
D1F8807B00000003
Always Place 1st 591474F3C0707041
Always Place 1st 591774F300000000

Rayman 2
Flying Rayman
89E080A320704E1E
58FB04DB00000040
Have Swinging Power Up
E23768CE0000006D
Infinite Health 5E3304DB0000001E
Infinite Air D400CE4D000000E1

Seaman
Air Never Drops When Game On
2DF76F200000FFFF
Heat Never Fluctuates When Game Is On 335928220000418B

Silver
Max HP 1st Character
8EA3BBBC000003E7
D458B563000003E7
Max MP 1st Character
8153BBBC000003E7
1CA4202D000003E7
Infinite Gold F8518F6800000010

NINTENDO 64

Asteroids Hyper 64
Infinite Lives 8007F90E0063
Infinite Points 8107F8FEFFFF
Infinite Armageddon 8107F8920001
Infinite Items on Pickup
8107F8A2270F

Hydro Thunder
Armed Response
802B5CA2 0001
Enable Code F124FFA02400
Place 1st 812C4C960001
Infinite Turbo 802C4C9D00FF
Enable All Tracks
812B5C940101, 812B5C960101
812B5C980101, 812B5C9A0101
812B5C9C0101, 812B5C9E0101
812B5CA00101
Enable All Boats
812B5CA20101, 812B5CA40101
812B5CA60101, 812B5CA80101
812B5CAA0101, 812B5CAC0101
812B5CAE0101

Pokémon Snap
Rapid Fire Apples and Bombs
80382CB70000
Have Apples, Bombs and Flute
803AE51F0004
Have Apples and Bombs
803AE51F0002

PLAYSTATION

Strider 2
Infinite Health
800ABA320006, 800ABA340006
Max Score
800D9DECE0FF, 800D9DEE05F5
Have Infinite Boosts 800ABB380004
Unlock All Levels 300D9E070006
Stop Timer 300D9E030063
Hien Mode 800A8D5A0001
Stop Timer (Strider 1)8006308A0032
Max Score (Strider 1) 80062F5CE0FF
Max Score (Strider 1) 80062F5E05F5
Infinite Lives (Strider 1)80062F520363
Have Robot (Strider 1) 80062F860100

Tenchu 2
RIKIMARU:
Press SELECT for Ninja Rebirth
Available at Weapon Select Screen
D00CE97AFFFE, 8001002CFFF0
AYAME:
Press SELECT for Ninja Rebirth
Available at Weapon Select Screen
D00CEZ97AFFFEZ, 8001004AFFF0
AYAME & RIKIMARU:
Invisible to Normal Enemies
EZ008CDC80000, 3008CDC80002

X-Men: Mutant Academy
P1 Infinite Health 800A1EZ5CB400
P2 Infinite Health 800A2432B40

GAME BOY

Mr. Driller
Infinite Air 016486C6
Infinite Lives 010283C6

Tomb Raider: Starring Lara Croft

Have Gold Bars	0163B3C1
Have Iris	0163B4C1
Have Snake Eye, Nightmare Stone and Orb	01FFB5C1
Have Staff Segment 1	0163B7C1
Have Staff Segment 2, 3	01FFB8C1
Have Heavy Bullets	01638EC1
Infinite Health	01FF89C1
Infinite O2	01FF8AC1
Have Large Health Paks	0163ACC1
Have Small Health Paks	0163ADC1
Have Door Keys	0163AEZC1
Have Panel Pieces	0163AFC1
Have Dynamite	0163B0C1
Have Snake Key	0163B1C1
Have Skeleton Key	0169B1C1
Have Alter Key	0169B1C1
Have Rapid Bullets	01638DC1

Rampage 2: Universal Tour

Play as Bosses

Play as Lizzie
On the Main Menu Screen, highlight and enter the Password option. On the Password Screen, enter S4VRS4560 as your code.

Play as George
On the Main Menu Screen, highlight and enter the Password option. On the Password Screen, enter SM14N1230 as your code.

1 **Play as Ralph**
On the Main Menu Screen, highlight and enter the Password option. On the Password Screen, enter LVPVS7890 as your code.

2 **Play as Myukus**
On the Main Menu Screen, highlight and enter the Password option. On the Password Screen, enter NoT3T3210 as your code.

Ready 2 Rumble Boxing

Character Codes
On the Main Menu Screen, enter any of these codes while highlighting Arcade Mode.

3 **Unlock Kemo Claw:** Left, Left, Left, Right, Right, Right, Left, Right, Left, Right.

Unlock Nat Daddy: Right, Right, Right, Left, Left, Left, Right, Left, Right, Left.

4 **Unlock Damien Black:** Right, Left, Right, Right, Left, Left, Right, Right, Right, Left, Left, Left.

TOP 10 TRICKS

half land, and half water. Surf on this section and just keep going up and down on it. When you run into an enemy, it will be the Pokémon from the Safari Zone section you just left. This time though, you will be able to fight them and use the other Balls.

9. WWF SmackDown! (PS)

Hidden Stuff
As you play through an entire season in SmackDown!, you will either unlock secret characters or get extra attribute points for your created wrestler. Here is a list of what you will unlock each year.

1st Year: Ivory,
2nd Year: Prince Albert
3rd Year: Jaqueline
4th Year: Viscera
5th Year: 80 points for created wrestlers
6th Year: Mideon
7th Year: Gerald Brisco
8th Year: Pat Patterson
9th Year: 90 points for created wrestlers

10. Pokémon (Red) (GB)

Infinite Items
WARNING: USE THIS TRICK AT YOUR OWN RISK. Now you can give yourself an unlimited supply of whatever item you have in your sixth inventory slot. This trick only works in the Red and Blue versions of the game. First, head to Viridian City and talk to the old man who instructed you how to use Poké Balls. When he asks you, choose to watch his demonstration again. Then immediately fly to Cinnabar Island. Choose a Pokémon who has the Surf Ability. Ride up and down the east coast (hugging the shoreline) until you get into a battle. You will encounter one of two glitchy Pokémon, either one with a name made up of scrambled boxes or the infamous Missingno. ***Important: Do not catch any Pokémon that you encounter here.*** It will ruin your saved game! Run from every battle. After running from a battle with a glitch Pokémon, check your inventory. Whatever was in the sixth slot should have a strange symbol where the quantity used to be. This usually means that you have well over 100 of that item. This can be done repeatedly, so you essentially have infinite items. Now, you can have a ton of Master Balls or enough rare candy to power up all your Pokémon to level 100. Just don't power them up past that because you then run the risk of damaging your saved game.

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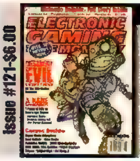

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The Gamecube Cometh

Chris: Nintendo did what they had to do at Space World—show everyone that even with X-Box and PlayStation 2 looming over the horizon they've still got what it takes. They decided to go against Sony's "we are the embodiment of all that is entertainment and our system will control your toaster" line and go for the simple, yet effective, "we're out to make a damn good game machine." Granted, we didn't see gameplay footage from anything on Gamecube (and I'll hold my final judgment until then), but it's exciting just to see what kinds of things can be done on the system. As for the look of the machine, I don't care what anyone says, I dig the cube. It's different, but it's far from the worst game system design I've ever seen (the toilet-esque Jaguar CD). Is this going to make anyone second guess a decision to buy a Dreamcast or a PS2? Probably not. If we as gamers decided not to buy a piece of hardware just because something new was on the horizon...well, we would never buy anything. Does it mean Microsoft's going to have a bigger challenge next fall? Count on it.

Greg: I'm pretty excited about the cube, though I can't get over that horrendous controller design. It looks like Batman dropped a Dual Shock into a vat of acid. The thing gives me nightmares! I am, however, very excited about the Game Boy Advance. Who wouldn't want what is basically a portable SNES? But again with the design, what the hell? It looks very uncomfortable. At least Nintendo announced a new Metroid game!

Kraig: Nintendo is obviously deciding once again to lock up the younger crowd that's put gazillions of $$ in their bank. They'll have their Joanna Dark games and sports games to try to attract the older players, but once again, Nintendo's game plan seems the same—X-Box and PS2, take all the older gamers you want. As for controller design, it may look stupid, but nothing could possibly be worse than the lame controller the N64 has.

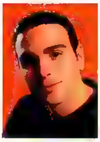
Crispin: Y'all need to quit harping on that poor controller. It looks like a jumbled pile of crap, sure, but wait until you actually try it with a game before you stick your noses up at it. I'm more interested in how the Game Boy Advance will work as a Gamecube controller. I think it'd be cool if some games required you to use both the regular controller and the Game Boy Advance. Maybe something like a Metal Gear Solid-style game, where you control your spy character with the joypad but then have to use the GBA to pick locks or defuse bombs. The GBA will certainly give you a lot more interaction with the Gamecube than the PocketStation or VMU did with their systems.

Jim: I'm really encouraged by what I see so far, including the design. I think it's nice to see them break out of the grey/black/white box and mix it up a little. The early screens look amazing, and the emphasis on the GBA interaction from the get-go seems to ensure that companies will incorporate it into their games on a much bigger scale than on other platforms. As far as the "kiddie" thing goes, just look at those Metroid shots! It seems like they may be the smartest contender in the console cold war yet. They had time to sit on the sidelines a little and hear what the pros and cons of the first two "next-gen" systems were, and build on them. One big example of this is the apparent distaste many developers have for programming for PS2. Nintendo says they concentrated on making the cube developer-friendly, and didn't get caught up in making it the biggest and fastest. This could mean tons of good companies/titles flooding in if developers really are as pleased as Nintendo thinks they will be; and good games always win over flashy specs in my book. Where do I preorder?

Milkman: I was semi-impressed by the Gamecube demos but then again, I was really impressed by the Mario face-pulling demo that was shown when the N64 first arrived. A year later the N64 didn't look so hot anymore. I can't tell from the specs what's going to appear on screen, but it doesn't look to outpace the PS2 in any way besides a purportedly programmer-friendly development environment. The fact that Retro Studios is doing the new Metroid game (Retroid?) doesn't inspire confidence. After all, they're little else besides an Iguana offshoot. It'd be like Naughty Dog doing the next Castlevania. I'm still looking forward to the Gamecube, as Nintendo always makes good games, but when it comes out it will be facing Nth-generation Dreamcast games, fourth-gen PS2 games and the X-Box. In my opinion it should be on the shelves right now!

Chris Johnston

Greg Sewart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NEXT MONTH

December 2000

On sale Oct. 30

PlayTested 2

The PlayStation 2 has landed, and we welcome it with open arms and our game rating clipboards. If you enjoyed our few PS2 reviews in this issue, just wait for next month, when we'll look at Tekken Tag, Smuggler's Run, FIFA and NHL 2001, Armored Core 2, Sipheed, Evergrace and lots more. The PlayStation 2 may be online in the future, but the Dreamcast has it now. We'll burn up the phone lines to review NFL 2K1 and the rest of the SegaNet online games.

How will Sega's NFL 2K1 perform over the Internet? We'll let you know.

Smuggler's Run is shaping up better than we anticipated. Get the full scoop on this potential hit next month.

- **You bought the system, now what games should you buy? All the answers in our PlayStation 2 review blowout!**
- **NFL 2K1 has arrived and now we can put SegaNet to the test**
- **Previews of Capcom vs SNK, Dragon Warrior VII and Paper Mario**
- **Power Tools returns with an all-new line-up of gadgets.**

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

Nov. 2000

On sale Oct. 9

Demo Disc

Playables

- **Spyro: Year of the Dragon**
- **Ultimate Fighting Championship**
- **Incredible Crisis**
- **Jarrett & Labonte Stock Car Racing**
- **Crash Bash**

Non-Playables

- **MGS2: Sons of Liberty**
- **Final Fantasy IX**
- **Driver 2**
- **Star Wars Demolition**
- **Cool Boarders 2001**

PlayStation 2

This month *OPM* will celebrate the launch of Sony's latest and greatest machine: the PlayStation 2! They'll take a look at the PS2's capabilities, the launch titles and the future of this mega-machine. Expect a full complement of DVD-related news, as well as a look at the actual system launch. *OPM* will also have more than 30 PlayStation and PS2 reviews, including SSX, Ridge Racer V, Tony Hawk 2 and Dino Crisis 2. If that isn't enough, check out the demo disc: It's got running video of Metal Gear Solid 2: Sons of Liberty along with playable Crash Bash and Spyro: Year of the Dragon!

Expert Gamer

Nov. 2000

On sale Oct. 16

Dino Crisis 2

Sony's über-machine is almost here and *XG* pays homage with an early introduction into PlayStation 2 strategies. They've got all the secrets, hints and gaming voodoo possible on three must-have launch titles: Tekken Tag Tournament, SSX and Ridge Racer V. Moving right along, don your jockstraps and hit the turf for some serious football. We're talking Madden (PS2), and we're talking NFL 2K1 (DC). Also, get old-school with a Street Fighter III: 3rd Strike (DC) strategy. Finally, *XG* throws a bone to all the regular PlayStation owners with a Dino Crisis 2 blowout.

- **Comprehensive guide to Dino Crisis 2**
- **Topnotch strategies for PS2 launch games**
- **Fall football fun with NFL 2K1 and Madden 2001**
- **Street Fighter III: 3rd Strike moves and combos**
- **DVD feature on hidden tips and tricks for your flicks**

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Directions. Follow the directions below to fill in the puzzle. Check the boxes on the entry form to specify the contests you are entering. Add up the entry fees and send that amount with the entry form to the address below. Remember, you can't win if you don't enter. Only one entry per person. Prize totals are descibed below puzzle. [illegible] entries must be post marked by [illegible] ALL ENTRY FEES MUST BE PAID IN U.S. [illegible] CHECKS.

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		T			
H	A	P	P	Y	O
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Trick of the Month

1. **No Purchase Necessary:** To enter, send a letter or standard size postcard with your best trick codes for any video game to "Tricks of the Trade," P.O. Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338, or e-mail us at: tricks@ziffdavis.com. Be sure to include your name, address, and phone number. No purchase or payment of any money is necessary to enter. One entry per household. Entries must be received by Oct. 18, 2000.

All entries become exclusive property of Sponsors and will not be acknowledged or returned. Sponsors assume no responsibility for lost, mutilated, late, illegible, incomplete, postage-due, or misdirected entries. Sponsors reserve the right to cancel this contest at any time with appropriate notice. Only one prize per family, organization, or household per issue. Winning entries may be printed in *EGM* and/or *Expert Gamer*, however, only one prize shall be awarded.

2. **Prizes:** First Prize winners will have their name and trick displayed in the magazine and will receive a video game cartridge selected by Sponsor. First Prize has an approximate retail value of $60.00. The best trick submitted by the First Prize winners will be declared the Grand Prize Winner. One Grand Prize winner will receive (in addition to the First Prize awards) one (1) Game Shark. Grand Prize has an approximate retail value of $99.95. Winners will be selected by a judging panel whose decisions are final. Winners shall be selected from all valid entries received. Entries shall be judged on the following criteria: (i) Uniqueness (25%), (ii) Novelty (25%); (iii) Accuracy (25%); and (iv) Originality (25%). Judging to be held on or about Oct. 30 2000. All prize winners will be notified by mail. Prize(s) are non-transferable. No substitutions of prize(s) are allowed, except at the option of Sponsors should the featured prizes become unavailable.

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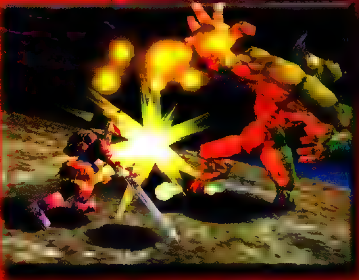

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Animated Blood

MARIO TENNIS™

First there was Mario Golf and now there's Mario Tennis. Thanks to N64 developer Camelot, Mario and his cast of friends have flourished in the usually bland country club sports of golf and tennis. Mario Tennis is a great example of how to make a game completely playable without making it simple—it's short on learning curve and long on fun. There are a ton of different game modes and 16 characters to master, each with their own particular attributes. Heck, you'll even find a new member of the Nintendo family in Waluigi. So pick up a controller, call some friends over and get ready for a multiplayer experience that outdoes any old Mario Party.

A Game With Some Balls

by Dan Leahy
dan_leahy@ziffdavis.com

I can't remember the last time I was this surprised by a game. Sure, I knew Camelot would develop a good product for N64, but Mario Tennis achieves the same level of quality as Mario Golf.

It is excellent in every regard. Great characters (even a new one, Waluigi) and simple controls will have anybody mashing the ball with Bowser in a minute or two, and deep gameplay will have seasoned veterans coming back for more. One feature that's sure to help the game stand the test of time is its multiplayer mode. Get a room full of people together and let the tennis wars begin, Mario style.

Of course, if you're having people over, you wouldn't want to suck at the game now would you? OK, then. Read up on the next few pages for some inside details on how to become a pro. See you at center court!

database

time to complete	20 hours
challenge	Moderate
best item	Bob-ombs
best character	Waluigi
best advice	Hit 'em where they ain't
also try	Mario Golf
system	N64
publisher	Nintendo
developer	Camelot

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www.nintendo.com

controls

The controls for Mario Tennis are amazingly simple, yet amazingly deep and refined. Tap A for a topspin shot and B for a slice shot. Tap A then B for a lob, or B then A for a drop shot. Other variations are: double tap A for a slightly juiced topspin ball (orange trail); double tap B for a slightly better fade or slice shot (blue trail). At the net, try hitting A+B at just the right time for a power smash (pink trail).

There are different factors that affect your shot. The most important is how early you hit A or B. The better you anticipate where your opponent is going to hit the ball, the sooner you can get there. Once you're in place, tap the shot button early and you'll notice your character charging up. The idea is to get max power on as many shots as possible, but don't get caught out of position. Too many players worry about power over placement—we're here to tell you placement is top priority.

Clay courts are just one of the different surfaces you'll find in Mario Tennis.

30 - 15
REPLAY

Hit a great shot and you'll be seeing a lot of these fancy replays.

surfaces

One of the many great features of Mario Tennis is the variety of the courts. Different players excel on the various surfaces depending on their individual traits. For instance, Yoshi is a fast character on any surface, but put him on a grass court and he'll be even quicker. Anyway, here's a quick rundown of the courts we found and their characteristics:

Hard: Normal ball speed, strong bounce.
Clay: Slow ball speed, weak bounce.
Grass: Fast ball speed, weak bounce.
Composition: Fastest ball speed, normal bounce.
Mario Bros. Court: Fast ball speed, weak bounce.

Some other general tips based on the courts are to tailor your shot based on the bounce factor. Use slice balls on weak bounce courts to deaden the ball. This will force your opponents to rush their shots. The opposite is true on strong or normal bounce courts. Here, use your power topspin ball to force the action. The topspin action, combined with a big bounce, will result in a very quick shot.

Modes of play

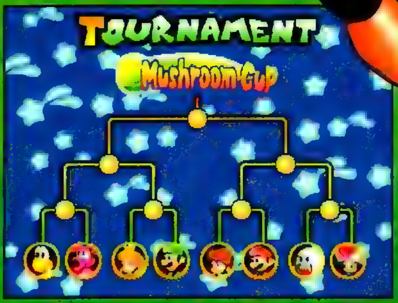
Pick up a racquet and try any of the many modes Mario Tennis has to offer. There are singles and doubles matches, tournaments, exhibitions and a ton of minigames (Bowser, Piranha, Ring Shot). You'll be happy to know, however, that Mario Tennis doesn't require you to unlock a lot of characters (remember Mario Golf?). The only two characters to unlock are Donkey Kong Junior and Shy Guy. DK Jr. can be unlocked by winning the doubles tournament in the Star Cup; Shy Guy can be unlocked by winning the singles tournament in the Star Cup. The other 14 characters are all available from the beginning.

tournaments

If you want a real challenge, try winning all of the tournaments with each of the different characters. The tournaments are Mushroom Cup, Flower Cup and Star Cup, with Star Cup being the most difficult. Mushroom and Flower Cup are each one-set tourneys, while Star Cup is a demanding three-set match.

TOURNAMENT
Mushroom Cup

Mushroom Cup
The first tournament



Mario

Player Style: All-Around

PLAYING As:

Mario is one of the quicker, more nimble characters in the game. When you play with him, get your opponent in the side-to-side game, working the baseline as much as possible. Chances are your opponent may make a mistake without you having to do much at all. If you're more the impatient type, force your foe into a corner with a fading slice shot (B button), then follow up with a rush to the net. Once you've taken away their angle, get ready to smash their return for a winner.

PLAYING Against:

Facing Mario is a daunting task, but don't worry, he's still vulnerable. One thing he can't do with great consistency is hit it by you. So, come to the net when possible and dare him to smoke one down the line or cross-court. One thing to remember, however, is that his speed will always give him a chance in any given point. You may think he'll never get to some shot and then, bam! He's tracked it down and you're toast.

Wario

Player Style: Power

PLAYING As:

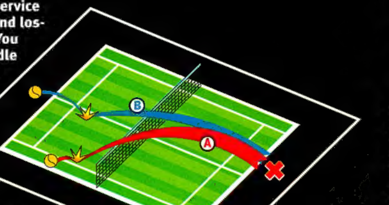
One of our favorite characters in the game, Wario packs a real punch. If you can anticipate where your opponent's shot is going to go, get there and power-up as much as possible. If you can do that, your shots will blister anybody coming to the net, or, at the very least, you'll keep them pegged to the baseline. Wario's foot speed is suspect, though, so be sure to return to the center of the court after most shots. He's a gonna WEEN!

PLAYING Against:

When facing Wario, it's important to stay away from his Andre Agassi-like forehand. He'll whip a passing shot by you before you know it. Keep the action in the middle third of the court to prevent Wario from hitting crazy angled shots for winners. Other than that, he's not too dangerous. Watch him cheating to the left or right side of the court and plan on sneaking one by him in the opposite direction.

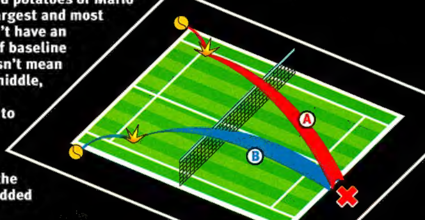
Serving Strategies

Mario Tennis is not a game built on serving, but a good service game can help make the difference between winning and losing. When serving, you really have two main choices: You can go wide to the corner (A), or straight down the middle (B). By going wide, you're forcing your opponent to run off the court and to tap one back your way. By the time they manage to get back into position, you can usually crack a winner to the opposite corner. If your serve isn't wide enough, however, you may find yourself flat-footed as your foe hits a winner down the line. Still, we recommend a wide serve most of the time. The risk/reward factor is high, and that kind of thing adds replay value. If you choose to go down the middle, you're basically encouraging a safe return and a longer rally-style point. The exception is if you can hit a power serve (A+B) perfectly at the "T" of the center line and service line—that's probably the toughest serve to accomplish. It's worth it, though, as your opponent will barely have time to get the ball back. Often, you'll have an outright ace.



Baseline Play

Baseline play and net play are the meat and potatoes of Mario Tennis. As the meat, baseline play is the largest and most important component of the game. You can't have an effective net game without it. The first rule of baseline rallying is to stay near the middle of the court. That doesn't mean you can't stray to one side or another, but if you're in the middle, it's extremely hard for your opponent to hit a shot by you. Another key to baseline play is to mix it up a bit when you have an opportunity to score. If your opponent is out of position in the top-left corner, it would make sense to smash one to the right side of the court (A). However, sometimes it makes sense to hit it right back to the left. Why? Because your opponent will be running like heck toward the right side of the court in an attempt to thwart the obvious shot. By doing the unexpected, you'll probably win the point with the added bonus of confusing the enemy.



Luigi

Player Style: All-Around

PLAYING As:

Always a basic, solid and well-rounded character, Luigi does a little bit of everything well. Use this to your advantage. Mix up your A and B serves, rush the net, play the baseline and so on. Basically, throw everything but the kitchen sink at opposing players. If you keep them on their heels, you're sure to swing the action to your favor—then it's up to you to decide how to win the point, as Luigi can end things with a variety of shots.

PLAYING Against:

Due to the wide-ranging talents of Luigi, pick your spots to be aggressive very carefully. If things go well, you'll have a chance to pierce his armor with a strong shot or two. Also, don't get in a rush to make the perfect shot. A series of well-placed balls can keep your opponent on the defensive and force a mistake. Remember, it's not always about winning the point. Sometimes it's better to let your opponent lose it.

Waluigi

Player Style: Technique

PLAYING As:

Waluigi may be recognized as a speed character, but he actually seems a step slower than some of the other quick cats. He makes up for it, though, with a lengthy reach that helps solidify his net game. To excel with Waluigi, you'll have to force the action. Hit sharply angled shots, backing your opponent up until his/her only choice is a lob. Because Waluigi's serve is pretty average, you may not want to charge in after your first offering.

PLAYING Against:

The longer the point lasts, the better chance Waluigi has of getting to the net. That usually spells trouble, so concentrate on getting the point over with quickly. Depending on who you're using, force the action with net play or powerful baseline strokes. Donkey Kong or Wario should have good success against Waluigi, as their power games can negate his net skills (if used correctly).

Peach

Player Style: Technique

PLAYING As:

Peach absolutely rocks in this game. She has good speed, great net instincts and pretty decent zip on her shots. The one thing she lacks is a big service game, but she more than compensates for it with her other skills. It's hard to give advice for Peach, but if we had to choose a tactic for her, we'd say go to the net as much as possible. Not much is going to get by her, and the percentages of you winning the point dramatically increase at the net.

PLAYING Against:

If Peach is standing between you and victory, know that you'll have a long battle ahead. One thing in your favor is that she lacks aggressiveness and a "killer" shot. She'll try to rock you to sleep with an array of topspin and slice shots, but she doesn't pose a huge threat from the baseline. If she's stretching you corner to corner with well-placed shots, counter with a lob to give yourself some time to regroup.

Bowser

Player Style: Power

PLAYING As:

Bowser is part Andre Agassi, part Ivan Lendl. That is, he's really powerful but somewhat slow (a little lack of foot speed is not that bad when you consider the laser-like abilities of Bowser's baseline strokes). The key to success with Bowser is to anticipate where the next shot is going to be. The earlier you get set in place, the more power he can build; the more power you have, the better chance you'll smack the ball for a clean winner.

PLAYING Against:

Although Bowser has awesome power, his stature prevents him from acting swiftly on the court. Just make sure that he doesn't get you nailed to a corner—if he does, it's only a matter of time before he changes direction and you're helpless. Stay near the middle "T" of the service line and everything should be cool. The first mediocre shot he gives you can be used to set him up for a loss.

Donkey Kong

Player Style: Power

PLAYING As:

You loved him in Super Smash Bros., you had to like him in Mario Golf and now you get to feel the rush of Donkey Kong with a tennis racquet. First off, DK's physical size is a benefit, as he can smash high lobs at the net with ease (we've never seen a ball ever make it over Donkey Kong's head). His lateral movement is suspect, though, so keep your opponent back with slice shots (B) and strong topspin balls (double tap A). Kong's strength makes it easy to take advantage of mistakes.

PLAYING Against:

To beat Donkey Kong, you'll have to get the big ape moving. DK has never been accused of being fast, and nothing's changed here. Work the corners and use what we call a yo-yo strategy: Send him deep with a strong shot, then pull back on the Analog for a short ball—he won't know if he's coming or going! If you really want to throw a wrinkle in, tap B, then A. The result will be a soft drop shot that has little bounce.

Yoshi

Player Style: Speed

PLAYING As:

Everybody loves playing tennis with a speedy dinosaur, right? We sure do. Yoshi has a great knack for getting to balls that would be out of any other player's reach. His power, however, is suspect, so be sure to make your shots count. One mishit or short ball and your foe will be eating your lunch. Still, Yoshi's speed and the accuracy of his shots should give you enough of an edge to win.

PLAYING Against:

When you're attempting to take Yoshi out, try to get him in a rhythm coming in and dropping back. Eventually, he should commit to the net and a firm topspin shot should pass him. If he returns your first (and subsequent) offerings, remind him who's boss with an overhead smash or two.

Daisy

Player Style: Technique

PLAYING As:

Daisy's another one of those technique players who thrives on just about every aspect of the game. Use her in tandem with a power doubles player for a potent team. In the singles game, you can use most of the same strategies applied to Peach.

PLAYING Against:

If you've got Daisy in your sights, you shouldn't worry too much. Her reach is a bit shorter than most of the characters in the game, so it's relatively easy to blow one by her.

Toad

Player Style: Technique

PLAYING As:

Toad is one squirrely character who mixes technique with an oddball appearance. The keys to using Toad are the same for the other technique players—his serve is a bit better, though, so try to use it to your advantage.

PLAYING Against:

For some reason, Toad lacks the pizazz of the other Mario Tennis characters. When playing against him, punish him with a barrage of deep topspin shots. Once he's on his heels, approach the net and take care of business.

Birdo

Player Style: Speed

PLAYING As:

Another goofy Nintendo character who could combine with Toad for the "all-weird" doubles team. Birdo is a fast dude, but he won't intimidate anybody off the court with his appearance. As with most speed characters, just try to frustrate your foes by running down every ball.

PLAYING Against:

Birdo is one easy chump to beat. Once he coughs up a lollipop serve for you, hammer it down the line opposite where he served from. By the time he runs that down, you should be able to get to the net. If you can't follow to the net, use a slice ball to the middle of the court—this will take away any great angles and should result in a nice opportunity.

Baby Mario

Player Style: Speed

PLAYING As:

One of the cutest little video-babies around, Baby Mario makes his appearance in Mario Tennis one to remember. Faster than mercury, Baby Mario is the Michael Chang of Mario Tennis. Run your opponent ragged by returning anything that crosses the net (that is the point of tennis, right?). Baby Mario is one of the few characters who can play between the baseline and the net effectively (an area known as "no man's land"). Hit mid-range topspin shots to cross up your opponent.

PLAYING Against:

Use Baby Mario's lack of height and reach against him. If he's sitting on the net, a good cross-court lob should send him reeling. Also, despite his speed, he can't muster up much of an offense. Eventually, if you press the issue with firm ground strokes, you'll have your way with Baby Mario.

Donkey Kong Jr.

Player Style: Speed

PLAYING As:

They may both be apes, but when it comes to tennis, Donkey Kong and Donkey Kong Jr. are completely different animals. As you'd expect, Jr. is not up to full size and thus plays to his strength, which is speed. As one of the speedier characters in the game, it's best to be patient with DK Jr., as he's not going to overpower anybody. Just run every shot down like a banana depended on it and you should be in good shape.

PLAYING Against:

When faced with this little hairy annoyance, be sure to smack him around with powerfully placed shots. Heck, if he's at the net, try to plant one off his noggin. If DK Jr. is frustrating you with his foot speed, try mixing up the pace with a lob or drop shot—this may result in him getting out of position to the point where you can take advantage.

Para Troopa

Player Style: Tricky

PLAYING As:

Para Troopa is pretty fun to play with, as his flighty course around the court can send opponents into fits. One of Para Troopa's biggest advantages is that opponents don't always see his shot right away. Once he hits the ball, a barrage of feathers disperse from his wings. This creates a kind of "smoke screen" that can delay reaction time. Even though he's listed as a tricky player, Para Troopa has pretty decent speed, so use that to your benefit.

PLAYING Against:

When faced with a match against Para Troopa, be sure to zone out his trickery. Flying feathers may be cool to watch, but stay focused on the little yellow ball which is traveling at you. Para Troopa can cover a lot of ground quickly, but his reach is very limited. Send him scurrying for wide balls for easy points. You can also pressure him by coming to the net after you serve.

Boo

Player Style: Tricky

PLAYING As:

Boo needs to use a funky serve to set up easy points. Once mastered, you can steer Boo's serve in the air and after the bounce. This works to great effect, as opponents have to guess correctly or miss the serve. Boo also seems to have a little extra waggle on his slice. If you're playing as Boo, spend a lot of time back near the service line. He's not overly quick, so you'll need the extra space to track down good shots.

PLAYING Against:

If you're playing against Boo, you might be in for a confusing match. His serve will bend in or out at the last second and, depending on which way you're leaning, it will squirt away from you. One tactic which helps offset this is to step nearer to the service return line. That way the ball won't have as much time to angle away from you before you can hit it. Playing back too far just ensures Boo a chance of acing you.

Shy Guy

Player Style: Technique

PLAYING As:

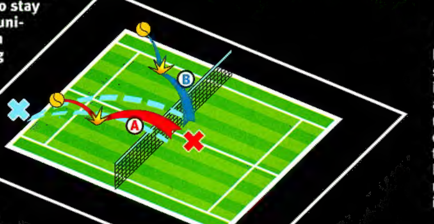
Ah, we saved the best for last. Well, he's not necessarily the best, but Shy Guy does have a great all-around game. As a technique player, Shy Guy thrives on doing everything better than average. Use his vast array of shots to the fullest and opponents will struggle to find a rhythm. Shy Guy is another one of the rare characters who can thrive between the backcourt and the net. His mid-range shots, especially with slice applied, are particularly effective.

PLAYING Against:

Playing against Shy Guy is like practicing against a wall. Practically everything comes right back at you. The one positive is that it doesn't necessarily come back at you with a lot of pace—this means that if you pick the right moment, you can go to the net and end a point quickly. Be careful, though! Don't approach the net if Shy Guy has worked his way past the baseline, as he's sure to hit it by you. Good luck!

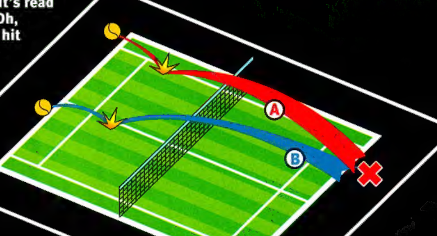
Working the Net

When you're at the net, it means two things: You're in a good position to win the point, or you're in a defensive mode trying to stay alive. Either scenario presents its own problems and opportunities, and there are too many to mention here. Let's start with the best-case scenario. You've driven your opponent into a corner and are awaiting his/her return. When positioned either just to the right or just to the left of the center line, you'll have a great chance of hitting the next ball for a winner. If your opponent goes down the line, reach and pop the ball back at him/her (A). If he/she tries to go cross court, pick the ball off and send it into the open court (B). Of course it doesn't always happen this easily. Sometimes you'll mishit the ball, sometimes your opponent will make a perfect shot, and sometimes you'll hit the ball out. Just remember that the closer to the net you are, the better your chance of closing out the point. And if you see a star appear near your side of the net, that's an opportunity for a strong overhead smash (A+B). Be careful not to swing too early, though, or you'll stand a chance of dinking the ball into the net.



Returning Serves

Returning serves is more of an art than a science. It's read and react. Rarely do you have enough time to say, "Oh, here's a nice yellow ball coming to me slowly, so I think I'll hit it to the left." Doesn't happen—not with Bowser's 108 mph heater coming at you, anyway. The best advice is to watch the ball from the second your foe tosses it in the air. As soon as he/she hits it, you'll know if it's to the right or to the left, so just react and get there. Returns are as follows; down the line (A); or back to the center (B). One common mistake is trying to cheat a little bit. If Bowser has been serving out wide all game, you'll be tempted to take an extra step in that direction before the serve. Don't do it. As soon as you do, a screamer will come down the middle and you'll be defenseless. Stay at home and you'll be increasing the chances of returning serves effectively.



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